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HOW THE (NORTH) WEST WAS WON:
DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION

by

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Patricia Alice McCormack

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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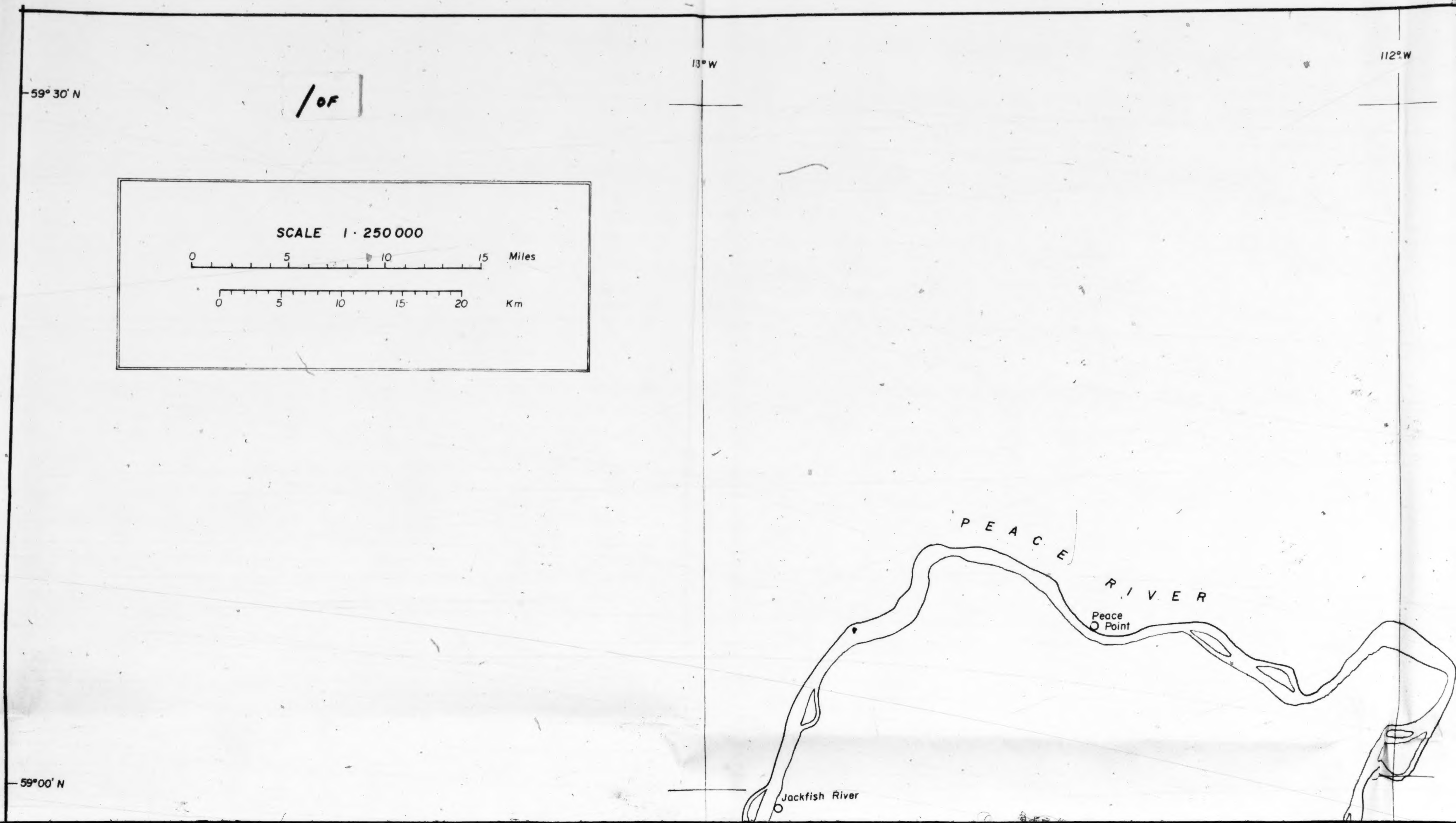
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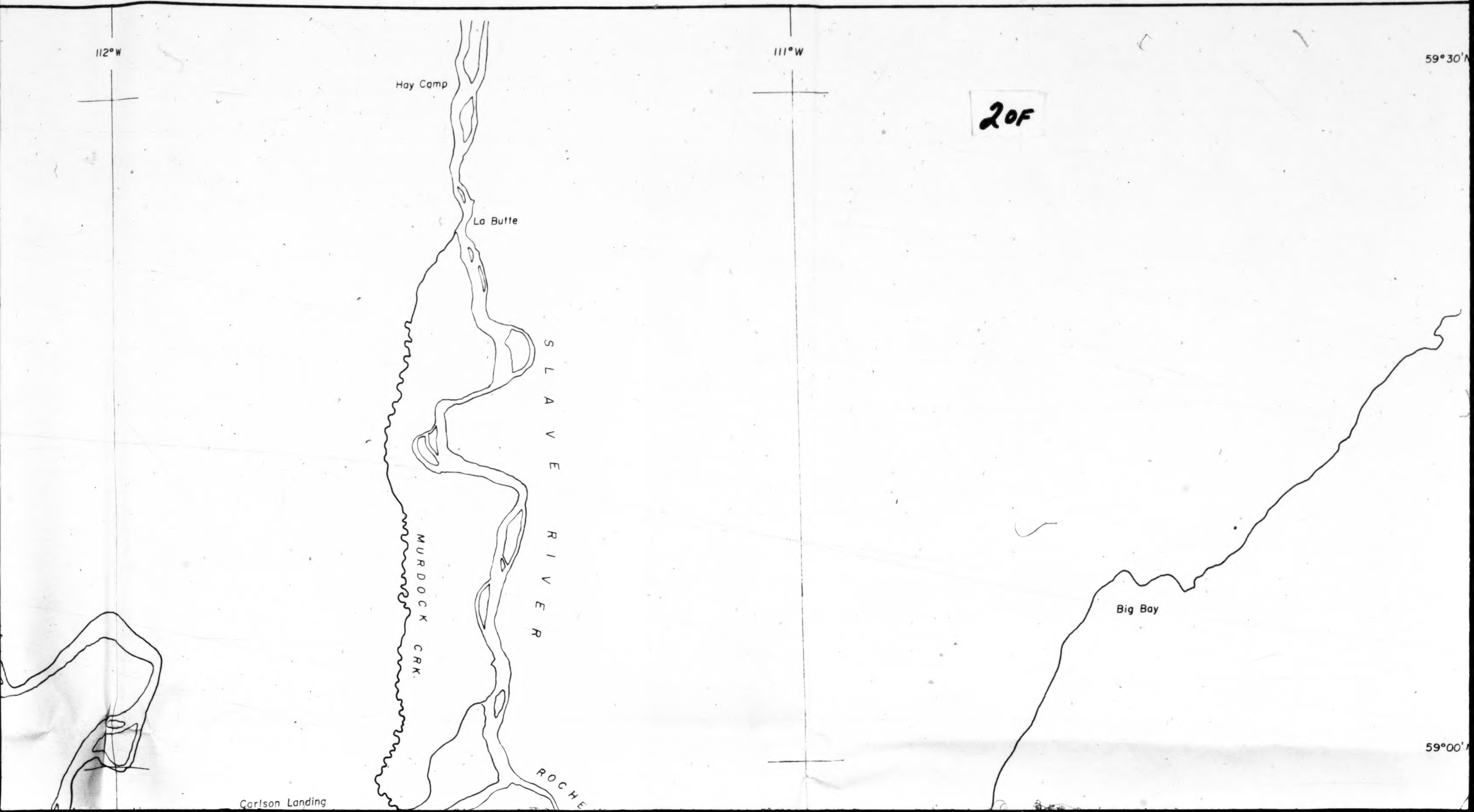
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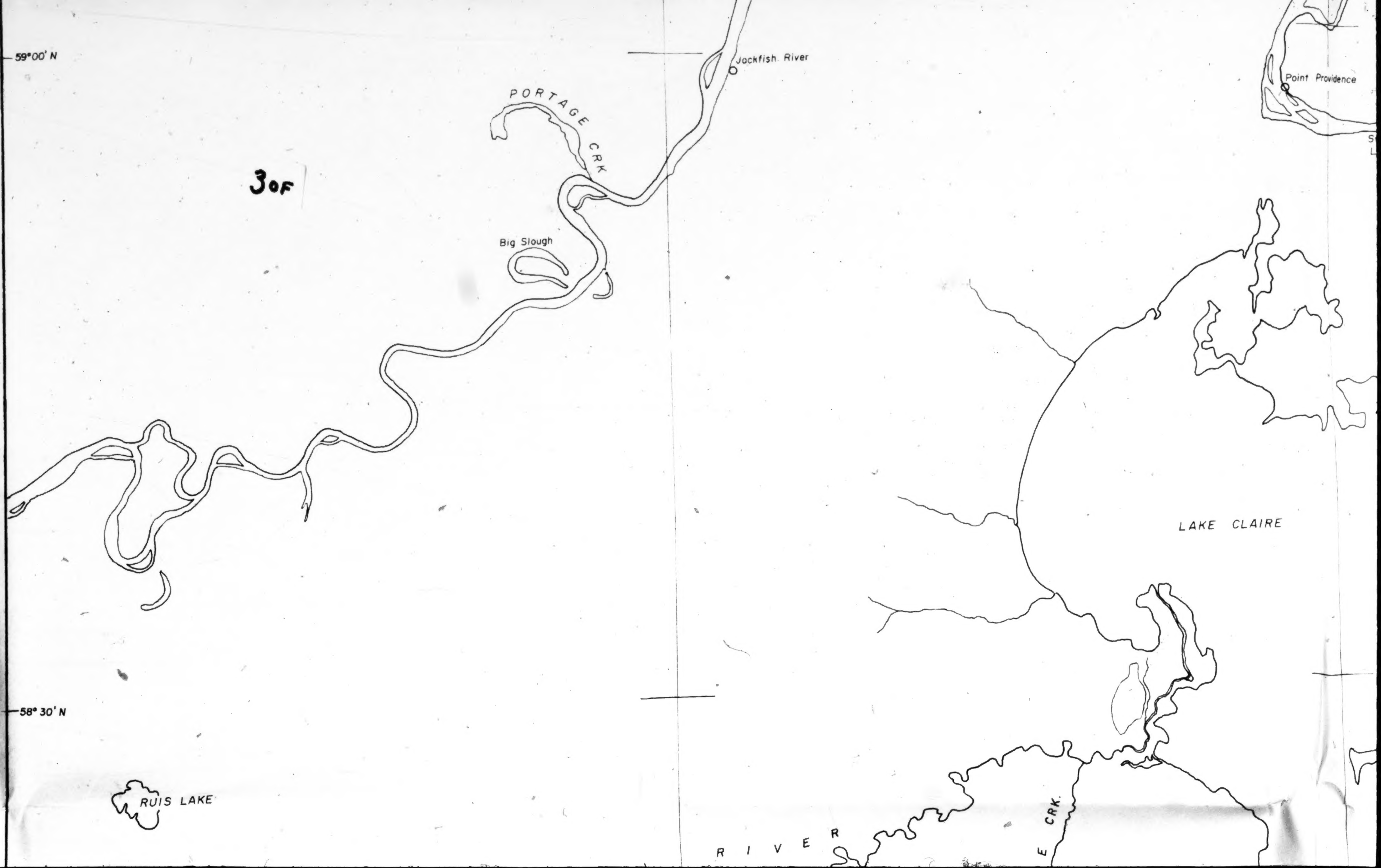
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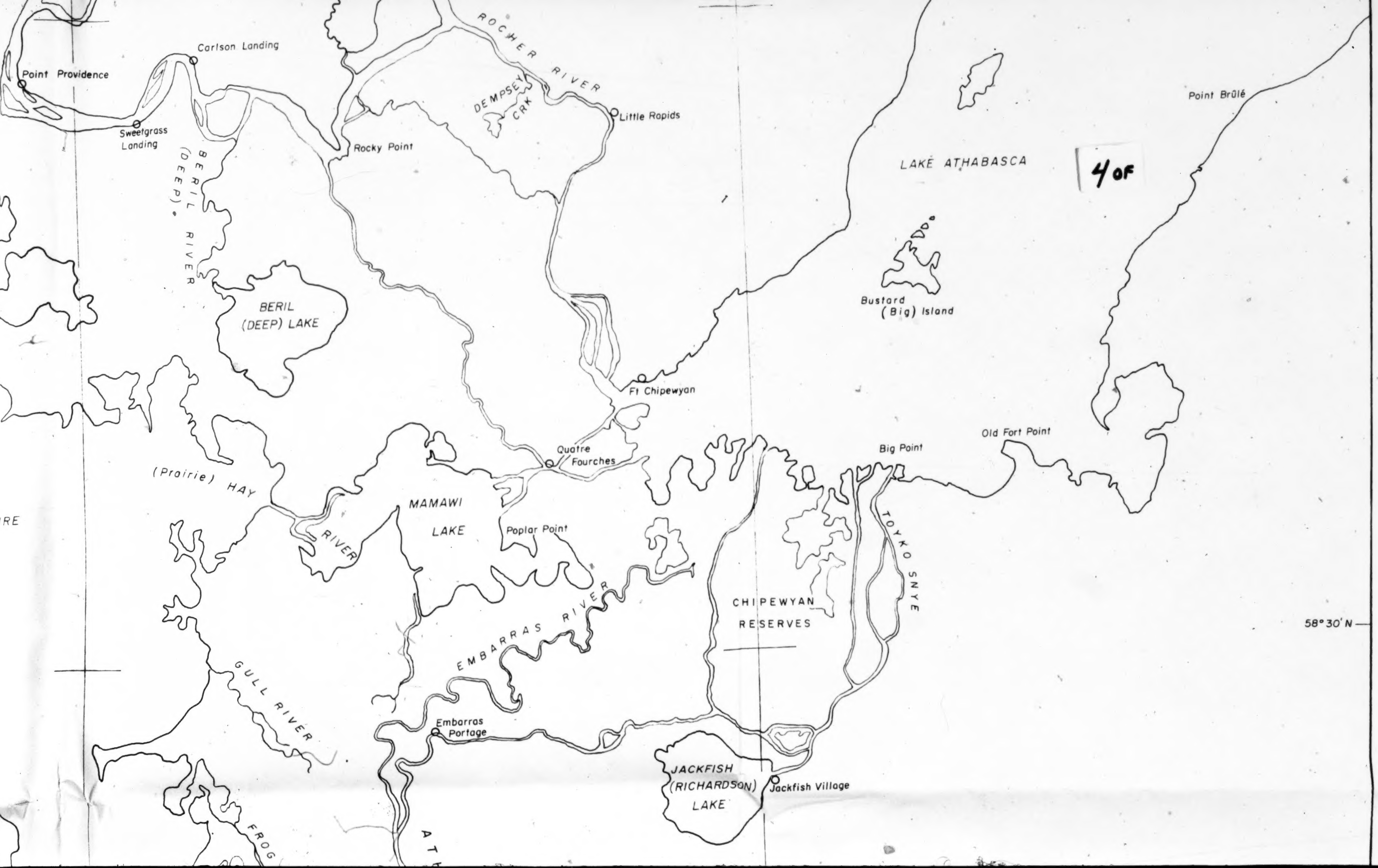
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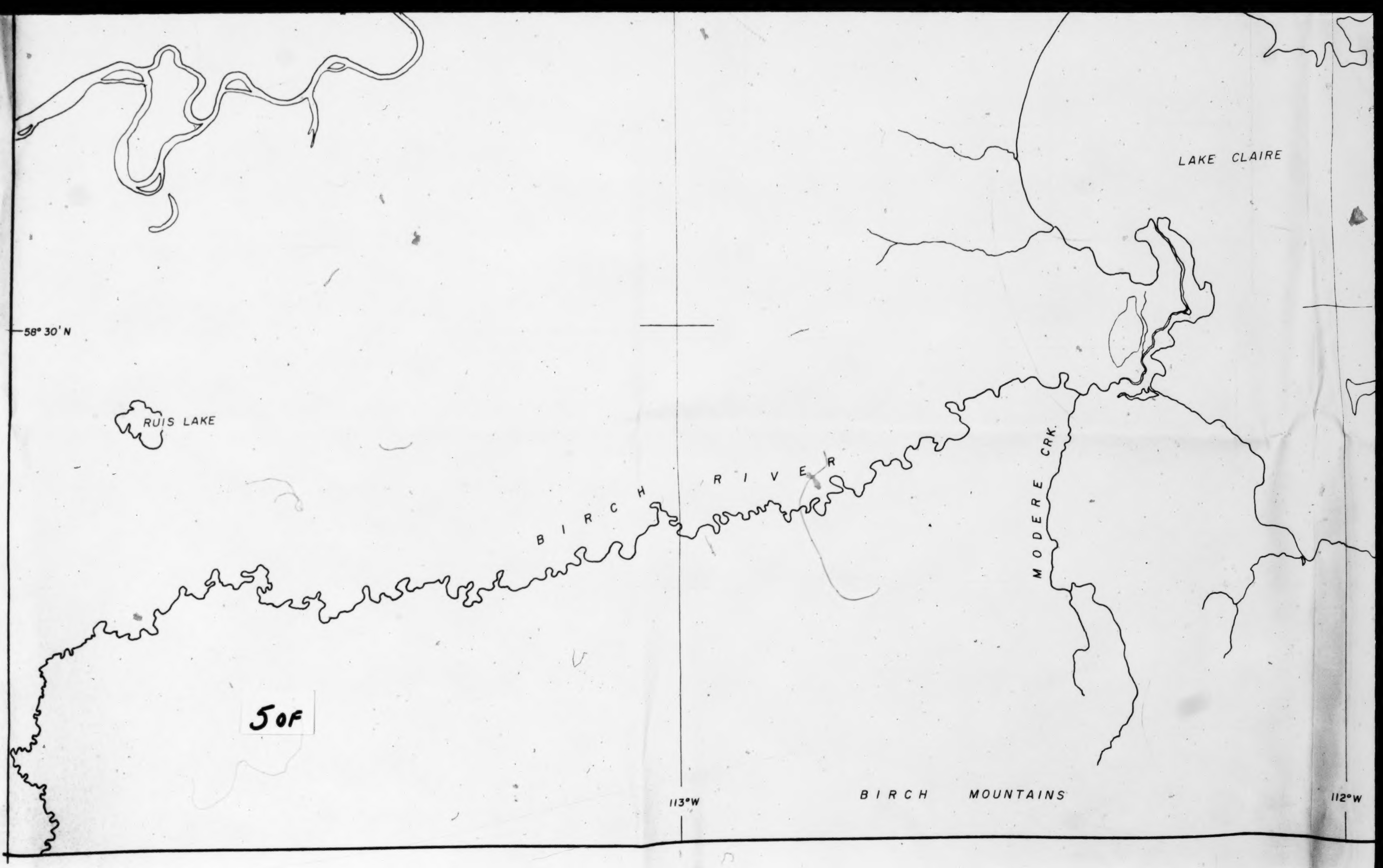
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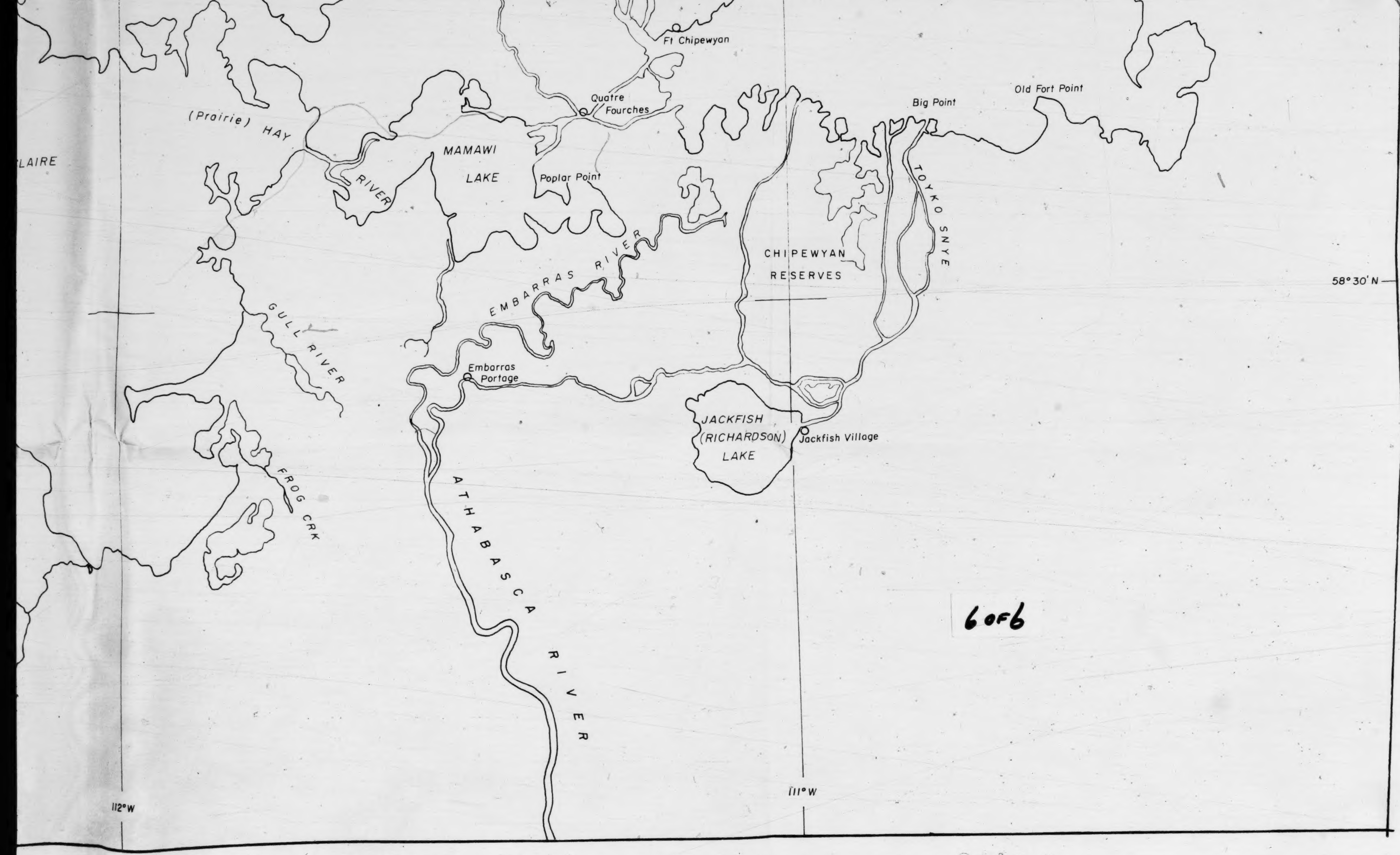
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External Examiner

Date May 14 1984

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the elders of Fort Chipewyan.

ABSTRACT

Fort Chipewyan is a predominately Native community located at the west end of Lake Athabasca in northern Alberta. The society there has been plural since the late 18th century, when the surrounding region was populated by Chipewyan and Cree Indians, Métis, and Europeans, all of whom were there because of their involvement in the fur trade which developed west of Hudson Bay. While Native residents of the region still hunt and trap, their cultures and the fur trade economy have changed profoundly since then. Formerly nomadic hunters now live in a permanent town and work for wages, which they spend on food and manufactures which they used to produce for themselves. Indians were formerly sovereign over their territories and independent in their societies and economies. Today, Indians and Métis are impoverished, dependent, and subordinate to the Europeans who established themselves and their political, economic, and social systems as the basis of the Canadian state. Historic cultural differences have been replaced by contemporary differences in social class and ethnicity.

This study is about this subjugation of the Native inhabitants of the Fort Chipewyan region to Europeans and to the Canadian state. It contends that the impoverishment, powerlessness, and dependency, and the related cultural and social changes which characterized the region in 1955-65, the ethnographic endpoint of the study, were caused by the expansion of the Canadian state (including both federal and provincial government agencies) and its political economy and regulatory regime into the region after 1918. The theoretical framework for this analysis

is the paradigm of the "world capitalist system," which has incorporated all peoples and cultures within its boundaries, but with unequal status and benefits. It is a study of the underdevelopment of the Fort Chipewyan region and its role as a "periphery" in the world capitalist system. As a consequence, it is an examination of the 20th century development and expansion of the Canadian state and its political economy *vis-à-vis* the "north."

By doing so the study describes the shifts in political, economic, and social relations, particularly relations of power, between Native and European peoples which occurred as part of this process of incorporation. It considers the impact of these changes on the indigenous cultures of the region, including alterations in technology and resources, or the means of production; access to and control over these means of production; the division of labor; the structure of domestic groups; relations of leadership, appropriation, and exchange; and settlement patterns.

RESUME

Fort Chipeweyan, communauté de l'Alberta du nord située à la pointe ouest du lac Athabasca, se compose essentiellement d'autochtones. Le pluralisme ethnique existe dans la région depuis la fin du 18^{è} siècle, celle-ci étant alors habitée par les Chipeweyans, les Cris, les Métis, et les Européens, tous engagés dans le commerce des fourrures se développant à l'ouest de la baie d'Hudson. Quoique les autochtones y pratiquent encore la chasse et la trappe, leur culture et le commerce des fourrures ont profondément changés. Nomades autrefois, les chasseurs sont sédentarisés. Ils vivent en ville, reçoivent un salaire dépensé en nourriture et articles manufacturés, produits qu'ils se procuraient ou fabriquaient eux-mêmes. Les autochtones, seuls maîtres de leur territoire, jouissaient d'une indépendance économique et sociale. Aujourd'hui, Indiens et Métis sont appauvris, dépendants, et subordonnés aux Européens qui s'y sont établis et y ont imposé leur système politique, économique, social, fondement de l'état canadien. Aux différences culturelles historiques se sont substituées celles, contemporaines, de classe sociale et d'appartenance ethnique.

L'assujettissement des autochtones de la région de Fort Chipeweyan aux Européens et à l'état canadien est donc le thème de cette étude. Celle-ci cherche à montrer que l'état de pauvreté, d'impuissance et de dépendance dans lequel se trouve cette communauté indienne, résulte de l'expansion de l'état canadien (appuyé par l'administration fédérale et provinciale) et de sa politique économique

et institutionnelle dans la région après 1918. Les changements culturels et sociaux liés à cette dépendance représentent un fait caractéristique de cette région dans les années 1955-1965, période à laquelle s'arrête cette étude ethnographique. Le cadre théorique dans lequel s'inscrit cette analyse est celui du paradigme du système capitaliste mondial dans lequel peuples et cultures ont été incorporés, mais auxquels on a dénié le droit à un status égal et au partage des richesses. Il s'agit d'une étude sur le sous-développement de la région de Fort Chipeweyan et de son rôle périphérique dans le système capitaliste mondial. Le développement et l'expansion de l'état canadien au 20^{è} siècle, sa politique vis à vis du nord, y sont donc examinés.

Ce faisant, elle décrit les modifications des rapports politiques, économiques, sociaux et particulièrement les rapports de force entre les populations autochtones et européenes. Elle tient compte de l'impact de ces modifications sur les cultures indigènes et des changements dans la technologie, les ressources et moyens de productions, l'accès à ces moyens de production et leur contrôle, la division du travail, la structure de la famille, les relations de pouvoir dans la communauté, les modes d'appropriation et d'échange, et enfin dans les modèles de formation des colonies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The process of research, analysis, and preparation of this study was a lengthy one, during which I spent five years living and working in the Yukon. Many people contributed to this process, some by their direct contributions of information, others by their intellectual, editorial, and "logistical" support, and still others by their willingness to welcome me into their homes and give me a glimpse of other lives at other times, or, as the Cree-speaking elders of Fort Chipewyan used to tell me, life kaiyas or long ago.

The one person who worked with me the most closely on this research is Dr. A. D. Fisher. His support and encouragement were unstinting, and he devoted much of his time and energy to assisting me with the study. He obtained some of the research funding, visited me in the field, listened to and read many versions of the analysis, guided me through the final stages of thesis preparation and defence, and edited the manuscript at various stages of its preparation.

My investigations overlapped with those of Mr. James Parker, the University Archivist, who played a large role in the later stages of the research. He very generously made the taping and xeroxing services of the University Archives available to me, and he read and commented on earlier versions of the study. The records of my research are stored in the Archives.

Other individuals at the University of Alberta who assisted in some way include Dr. Michael Asch, Dr. Henry Lewis, Dr. Olive Dickason, and Ms. Theresa Ferguson (also of the Metis Research Project). Dr.

Ron Scollon and Ms. Suzanne Scollon, now of the University of Alaska, investigated linguistic changes in Fort Chipewyan in 1976-77, and they allowed me to read their field manuscript.

The research was funded in part by a 1975 research grant from the Boreal Institute for Northern Studies to investigate the Native uses of fire in the Lake Athabasca region, and by a Boreal Institute grant in 1978 to Dr. A. D. Fisher to investigate education and colonial policy in Fort Chipewyan. The Department of Anthropology provided me with summer bursaries in 1975, 1976, and 1977. Their support is gratefully acknowledged.

The study is based on information which was obtained from three different sources: people living in Fort Chipewyan, people who had formerly played some role in the community or surrounding region, and documentary and archival collections.

The people of Fort Chipewyan made my research possibly by opening their homes to me and my dogs and by sharing their memories with me, especially in 1977 and 1978, but also in visits I made to the community before and after those dates. In particular, I want to thank Joe Bourke and the Bourke family (Alphonse and Mary Bourke, Gabriel and Peggy Bourke, and Elsie [Bourke] and Carl Granath), John James and Pauline Marten and their daughters Virginia and Shirley, and Madeleine Tuccaro. Many other Native people of Fort Chipewyan contributed in some way. The following is only a partial list: Louis Boucher, Louise Campbell, Emily Champagne, Tommy and Margaret Champagne, Ernie Courtoreille, Fred and Antoinette Courteoreille, Jenny Flett, Sonny and Vitaline Flett, Frank Ladouceur, Noel and Isabel MacKay, Fred Marcel, Rosalie Marten, Snowbird Marten, Victorine Mercredi, Eva and James Paquette, Sammy Tuccaro, Joe and Girly Vermilion, Maria Vermilion, Mary (Iskwesis)

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The documentary collections were the third source of materials used in the study. They included collections in the Public Archives of Canada, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, where I was assisted by Ms. Shirlee Anne Smith. Hudson's Bay Company materials are used with their permission. The religious orders of the north have their own archives. I consulted materials in the Archives of the Oblats de Marie Immaculée of the Province of Mackenzie, through the assistance and cooperation of Father Gilles Mousseau, O.M.I., and in the Archives of the Bishop of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith, through the cooperation of Bishop Paul Piché. The Sisters of

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The final version of the study was prepared with the help of Dr. A. D. Fisher, who edited the manuscript; John Glew, who drafted the maps and other figures; Nancy Gibson, who proofread the manuscript; and Barbara Bensadoun, who translated the abstract into French.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM 1

Forty Years of Change: Parameters 5

Ethnographic Baseline 1918 5

Ethnographic Endpoint 8

Theoretical Framework 11

Thesis 14

Chapter Outline 16

The Research Data 18

Notes 22

2 STUDYING CULTURE CHANGE IN THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION: THEORETICAL GUIDELINES 23

The Paradigm of World Capitalism 23

The Role of the State 30

The Capitalist Mode of Production and its Relation to Pre-Capitalist Modes 35

The Social Formation: Tools of Analysis 36

Mode of Production 37

Superstructure 38

Changes in the Social Formation 40

Applications 40

The Aboriginal Mode of Production 41

The Capitalist Mode of Production 43

Merchant Capitalism and the Fur Trade Mode of Production 1821-1870 45

CHAPTER PAGE

The Undermining of Mercantilism and the Fur Trade Mode of Production 1870-1948 53

Industrial Capitalism and the Proletarianized Mode of Production 1948-1965 57

Conclusion 58

3 CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASELINES: THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION 1918 61

The Social Formation 62

Life in the Bush 68

Hunting and Trapping 68

Wage Labor 72

Dual Strategies 73

Male-Female Relations 74

Disease 76

Life in Fort Chipewyan 77

Traders 77

Métis 79

The Fur Trade Mode of Production 81

Forces of Production 81

Relations of Production 82

The Expansion of the State 85

1870-1899 86

1899-1918 90

Conclusion 93

Notes 94

INDIANS LOSE CONTROL 1918 to 1948 97

4 REGULATORY AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR IMPACTS IN THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION 1918 to 1939 100

CHAPTER PAGE

The 1920s: Capitalist Ventures Intensify in the North 102
The 1920s: The Fort Chipewyan Region 106
Outside Trappers 107
  Lac La Biche Métis Move North 108
  Non-Native or White Trappers 111
  Indian Protests and Strategies 116
The Creation of Wood Buffalo Park 121
  Park Warden Service 123
  Land Use Regulations 125
  Hunting and Trapping Regulations 127
  Métis Trappers 130
  Traders 132
  Treaty 8 Indians Enter the Park 134
  Violation of Game Regulations 135
  Eliminating Indians from the Park 136
Wood Buffalo Park Expands 1926 138
  The Wainwright Bison 138
  The Park Annex 1926 140
  New Access Regulations 144
  The Permit System 145
  Enforcement of Park Regulations 148
  Traders 151
  Bison Hunting 152
  Park and Delta Indians: Different Situations 153
The Advent of Commercial Fishing 159
The 1930s: The Depression Years 164

CHAPTER PAGE

Federal Administrative Changes 164
Alberta and the Depression 166
Northern Development 167
Northern Mining 169
Transportation Developments 171
Outside Trappers 173
The 1930s: The Fort Chipewyan Region 174
Wood Buffalo Park 175
Regulating the Trade 175
Trading Posts and Outposts 183
Permits and Access to the Park 188
Internal Restrictions 195
Indian Resistance 197
The Warden Service 203
White Trappers 206
Animal Populations 208
Muskrat Conservation 212
Incomes from Trapping 214
Conflicts and Stresses: Trappers and Traders . . . 215
Bison Slaughters 217
Proposed Commercial Exploitation Schemes 219
The Rest of Alberta 222
The Chipewyan Reserves 224
Métis 233
Commercial Fishing 236
Conclusion 237
Notes 239

CHAPTER PAGE

5 CRISIS YEARS 1939 TO 1948 246

The War Years 249

The Strategic Northwest 249

The Northern Boom 252

Commercial Fishing 255

Changes in Government Responsibility 256

Family Allowances 257

The 1940s: The Fort Chipewyan Fur Trade Economy - Alberta 260

Registered Traplines 260

Fur and Game Production 264

Economic Options 268

Wood Buffalo Park: Crees Press for their Reserve . . . 271

The Threat of Eviction 271

Park Chipewyan Turn Cree 277

Wood Buffalo Park: New Hunting and Trapping Regulations 281

Decline in Fur and Game 281

Proposed Solutions 284

Wolf "Control" 289

Restrictions on Moose Hunting 295

Requests for Bison 301

The Elimination of Controlled Burning: A Hidden Causal Factor 304

Implications 306

Conclusion 307

Notes 308

CHAPTER PAGE

6 THE FUR TRADE MODE OF PRODUCTION: PERSISTENCE AND STRESS 314

Kaiyas: A Way of Life "Long Ago" 315

Summer: Visit to Fort Chipewyan 316

Treaty Day 321

Marriage 323

Summer Hunting and Fishing: Preparation for Fall . 325

Wage Labor 327

Fall: Preparation for Winter 329

The Fall Outfit 330

Life in the Winter Settlements 331

Spring 334

"Hold-outs" 337

The Bush Settlements 338

Park 341

Alberta 345

The Indian Agent 347

The Indian Agent as Patron 348

Traditional Leaders Undermined 350

Disease 352

The Indian Agent-Physician 355

Indian Agent Jack Stewart 356

Education 359

Family Allowance and School Attendance 366

Summary 369

Social Stratification and Ethnic Processes 370

The White Sector 372

CHAPTER PAGE

Attitudes toward Natives 374
Native Responses to Racism 376
Conflict Within the White Sector 377
The Native Sector 379
Ethnic Processes 382
Conclusion 384
Notes 391
THE NEW NORTH 1948-1965: DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT 395
7 NORTHERN CLASS-CAPITALISM 398
The Traditional Economy in Transition 402
Troubles with Trapping 402
Efforts to Cope: Trapping 406
Efforts to Cope: Wage Labor 410
Wood Buffalo Park: Open for Business 414
Commercial Fishing on Lake Claire 418
Renewed Efforts to Gain Access 418
The 1948 Fishery: An Experimental Operation 422
The 1949-1950 Fisheries 426
Later Fisheries 1954-1966 432
Conclusion 432
Commercial Lumbering in the Park 434
First Efforts 434
Eldorado Mining and Peace River Sawmill 437
New Logging Ventures 441
Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd. 442
Denney Logging Company 449

CHAPTER PAGE

Wood Buffalo Park Timber Co. Ltd. and Primrose Forest Products Limited 451

Economic Impact of Logging 453

Social Impact of Logging 455

Reliance on the Sawmill: New Problems, Old Problems 457

Conclusion 465

Bison "Management": A Commercial Slaughter Operation . 467

1950-1962: Tuberculosis and Meat Production 467

1962-1968: Bison Management, Meat Production, and Anthrax 476

Conclusion 479

Alberta and its Northern Hinterland 481

Alberta: A Post-War Entrepreneur 482

Native Peoples 483

Proposed Changes in Wood Buffalo National Park Boundaries 483

Commercial Fishing 485

British Columbia and the Bennett Dam 488

Construction of the Dam 489

Environmental Impacts of the Bennett Dam 491

Socio-Economic Impacts of the Bennett Dam 494

Conclusion 498

Notes 499

8 A PROLETARIANIZED MODE OF PRODUCTION 506

The Fight for Local Control 508

The Cree Band's Land Entitlement 509

Indian-Métis Cooperation 511

CHAPTER PAGE

The Move to Town 513

The Move to Town: An Orderly Process? 515

Relocation in the 1940s/50s/60s 516

Government Services and Programs 524

"The Disease of Living in Town": Relocation in the latter 1960s/1970s 530

Summary 533

A Proletarianized Mode of Production 533

The "Traditional" Sector 534

The "Modern" Sector 536

Interrelationships 537

Summary 538

Conclusion 540

Note 541

9 CONCLUSION 542

Fort Chipewyan as External Arena 1682-1821 545

Fort Chipewyan as Periphery 1821-1965 546

The Preeminence of Mercantilism and the Fur Trade 1821-1870 546

Mercantilism Undermined 1870-1948 548

The Preeminence of Industrial Capitalism and Northern Exploitative Industries 1948-1965 551

REFERENCES 553

Interviews 553

Archives and Documents 554

Manuscripts 558

Published Sources 559

PAGE

APPENDIX 1. EXCERPTS FROM JACK STEWART'S DAILY JOURNAL: JUNE 5, 1944 - MAY 17, 1945 581

APPENDIX 2. FISHING LICENCE 1946 585

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Description	Page
1	The Development of the Social Formation	46
2	Trading Posts and Outposts in Wood Buffalo Park, 1929 to 1936	186
3	Park Districts and Average Trapping Density	196
4	Total Game and Fur Yield for Wood Buffalo Park, 1934-35 and 1944-45	210
5	Fur Production in Alberta 1941-1951	265
6	Moose Harvests in Wood Buffalo Park 1931-32 to 1945-46	293
7	Bush Settlements - Fort Chipewyan Region	340
8	Native Sector: Internal Differentiation	380
9	Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd. Wage Scale, 1966 and 1967	447
10	Commercial Sales of Bison Meat 1954-55	474

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Description	Page
1	The Fort Chipewyan Region	2
2	The Fort Chipewyan Region	99
3	Wood Buffalo Park	124
4	Wood Buffalo Park Hunting and Trapping Districts	146
5	Administrative Districts 1935-36, Wood Buffalo Park	204
6	Fur Production and its Value 1941-1951	266
7	Trapping Areas in the 1950s, Wood Buffalo National Park	290
8	Traditional Land-Use Areas	339
9	Charges and Convictions 1925-1948	387
10	Forest Management Areas, Wood Buffalo Park, 1958	436
11	Bison Slaughters 1951-1971	473

CHAPTER 1

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Fort Chipewyan is a predominately Native community located at the west end of Lake Athabasca in northern Alberta (fig. 1). Its society has been a plural one since the late 18th century, when the surrounding region was populated by Chipewyan and Cree Indians, Métis,[1] and Europeans. As figure 1 illustrates, the Fort Chipewyan region is bounded to the west by Fifth Meridian and to the east by the Saskatchewan border, to the south by the 27th Baseline and to the north by an east-west line bisecting the Slave River at Hay Camp. These boundaries are approximate, because individuals located there moved around considerably during their subsistence and trapping activities. Major areas within this region include the southern half of Wood Buffalo National Park, especially the Peace and Birch Rivers, the Peace-Athabasca Delta, the lower Athabasca River, the upper Slave River, and the country to the south and north of the eastern end of Lake Athabasca.

Native and European peoples occupied this region because of their involvement in the fur trade that developed on the west side of Hudson Bay after 1682 and later expanded into the western interior. Fort Chipewyan, Alberta's oldest settlement, was founded by the Northwest Company as a trading post in 1788. It subsequently became one of the most important fur trade centers in western Canada. The historical forces to which the local aboriginal peoples were subjected were not unique. However, because of the historical duration, the changing ethnic composition, and the extremely rich resource base, the Fort Chipewyan region displays

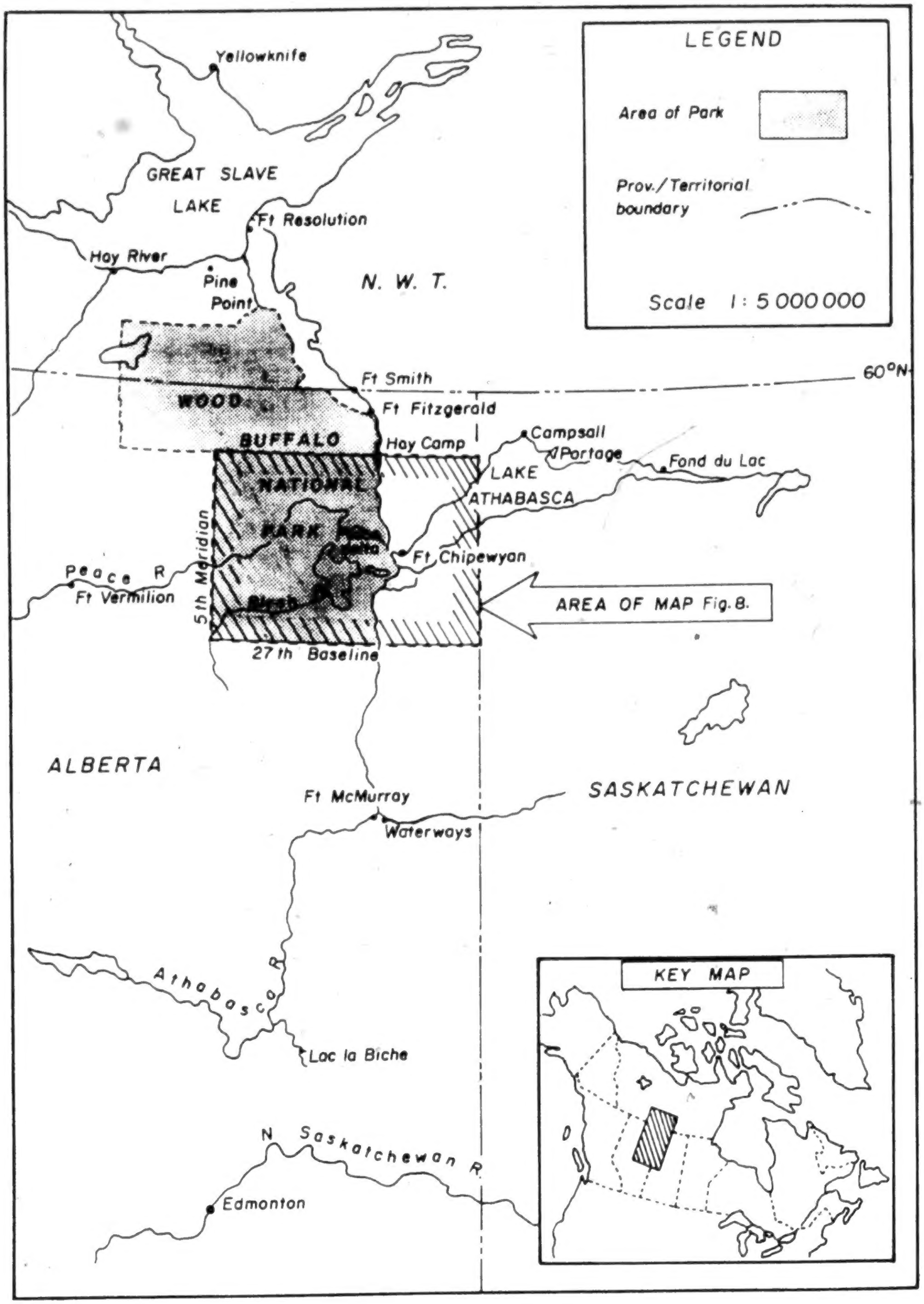
LEGEND
Area of Park
Prov./Territorial boundary
Scale 1: 5 000 000
Yellowknife
GREAT SLAVE LAKE
Ft Resolution
Hay River
Pine Point
N. W. T.
WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK
Ft Smith
60°N
Ft Fitzgerald
Hay Camp
Campsall Portage
Fond du Lac
LAKE ATHABASCA
Ft Chipewyan
Delta
Birch
Peace R
Ft Vermilion
5th Meridian
27th Baseline
AREA OF MAP Fig. 8.
ALBERTA
SASKATCHEWAN
Ft McMurray
Waterways
Athabasca R
Lac la Biche
N Saskatchewan R
Edmonton
KEY MAP

Figure 1. The Fort Chipewyan Region

many unique adjustments or adaptations to these external events.

Two centuries after its founding, Fort Chipewyan still serves the needs of trappers and hunters, but it functions primarily as a minor administrative center for the Native peoples and the few Euro-Canadians[2] who live there. Cultures have changed so profoundly that today's residents would barely recognize their predecessors. Formerly nomadic hunters and gatherers now live in a permanent town and work for wages, which they spend on food and manufactures which they used to produce for themselves. Similarly, present day Euro-Canadians live very differently from the early French and British traders. Indeed, Natives and non-Natives look alike in many ways. Although differences between them still exist and are important, they are less obvious than they once were. Over time there has been increasing cultural similarity and the loss of distinctive cultural forms, a process of homogenization. In other words, while the lifestyles of these pioneering peoples have changed drastically, the cultural gaps which separated them in the past have narrowed.

The most striking of these changes is the reversal in the relationship between Natives and Europeans. When first contacted, Indians were sovereign over their territories. They were independent, autonomous peoples. While Europeans were not politically subordinate to the Indians, they depended on their good will not only for a successful fur trade, but also for their very survival. Similarly, Métis, who developed as a distinctive cultural group after European contact, were vital to the smooth functioning of the fur trade posts, since they provided its usual labor force during the 19th and 20th centuries. Many Métis came to occupy eminent positions in the fur trade ranks. They also retained strong ties to the land and had considerable political autonomy as laborers. Today that situation has turned around. Indians and Métis are impoverished, dependent, and subordinate to the Europeans who have established themselves and their political, economic, and social systems as the basis of the Canadian state. To a large extent, historic cultural differences have been replaced by contemporary differences in social class and ethnicity.

This study is about this subjugation of the Native inhabitants of the Fort Chipewyan region. It explains how these individuals and their societies were incorporated into the Canadian political economy, especially after World War I, which saw the active expansion of the Canadian and provincial states into the region and the consequent penetration of the region by a modern form of capitalism, which replaced the formerly dominant mercantilism of the fur trade. The study demonstrates the shifts in political, economic, and social relations, particularly relations of power, between Native and European peoples which occurred as part of this process of incorporation. It considers the impacts of these changes on the indigenous cultures of the region, including alterations in technology and resources, or the means of production; access to and control over these means of production; the division of labor; the structure of domestic groups; relations of leadership, appropriation, and exchange; and settlement patterns.

This chapter develops the problem of this study by delineating an ethnographic baseline (1918) and comparing it to an ethnographic endpoint (1965). It highlights the major modifications in Native lifestyles and situations. It then introduces the theoretical framework on which the study is founded and states the thesis which is to be demonstrated. It outlines the overall organization of the study. Finally, it discusses the data which were used for the study.

FORTY YEARS OF CHANGE: PARAMETERS

Ethnographic Baseline 1918

As Canada emerged from its involvement in a world war in 1918, Native peoples in the Fort Chipewyan region were still heavily involved in the fur trade economy which had developed there in the previous century. The local social formation was ethnically complex. There were both Chipewyan and Cree Indians, with Chipewyans greater numerically. There were also large populations of Scots and French Métis, many of whom worked for the traders and for the mission complex. While some Euro-Canadians were present, mainly as traders, missionaries, and government agents, they were few in number. There was no resident Indian Agent. The territory surrounding the settlement of Fort Chipewyan was homogeneous, in that it had not yet been carved up into the park, the Chipewyan reserves, and the restricted trapping areas which exist today.

Natives had a fur trade mode of production, in which they produced goods both for their own use and for exchange, as well as working directly for the merchants, providing services. As trappers or independent commodity producers they processed pelts of fur-bearing animals which they exchanged with traders for manufactured goods - durable items such as tools and consumable items such as clothing - both necessities and luxuries. Many of the tools which they required for activities in the bush came from the trading posts and could be called capital equipment. Their resource base consisted of the large and small game, fish, and plant materials which they used in the production of food, fur, and some items of clothing and technology. Game populations were usually sufficient, even ample, enabling the Natives to produce all that they needed for their own use and for exchange. Indians were typically associated with life in the bush and an emphasis on trapping, while Métis were more likely to live in Fort Chipewyan and work for wages. Nevertheless, both relied on this mixed economy, though with differing emphases.

This mode of production contained the potential for conflict between communal productive enterprises and individual consumption. On the one hand, it was expected that necessities of life would be shared among the members of the social group; the good fortunes of one individual easily became the good fortune of the band. On the other hand, individuals had their own individual accounts with the traders, and wage labor was a highly individualized activity. This potential conflict was realized by the necessity for individuals to obtain the capital goods necessary to exploit the bush resources which might later be consumed communally. It was mediated by the fact that goods obtained in trade by individuals were used to benefit the entire social group.

The fur trade operated primarily through a credit system, whereby a trapper was outfitted by a trader each fall on credit, with the amount based on his (or her) previously demonstrated productivity as a trapper, his needs for certain basic items, and his personal relationship with the trader. The trapper paid off this debt to his account when he visited the post at Christmas, Easter, or in early summer with furs to trade, or when the trader visited his winter residence in the bush settlement. This system created relations of obligation between the trader and the trapper, which were strengthened by the fact that the trade was commonly linked by marital and kinship ties to the Native community. The trader was often able to intervene in the productive process in order to encourage fur production to meet the needs of the market and his own particular enterprise. He exercised control over only those individuals and their families who contracted debts or who wished to sell their furs; he did not control their kinsmen, nor their land and its resources. The Natives' control over the means of production located in the bush, their motivations toward production, and their access to the bush were interfered with very little, beyond inducements to trap exclusively for the trader, to perform day-labor, and to regulate supply and demand locally.

The social unit in the bush was the autonomous localized Indian band, composed of bilaterally interrelated families and their Métis affiliates, approximately 25-50 individuals, under the leadership of a respected person. Bands were usually ethnically homogenous, either Cree or Chipewyan, although inter-band alliances were formed through strategic marriages between Chipewyan and Cree families. Each band formed a residential unit during the winter months, when its constituent families clustered together in log cabin communities located within its trapping territory. Each band claimed some control over this territory and the fur resources it contained, especially over beaver. In the summer the band dispersed into smaller family units, whose members travelled through the bush hunting, fishing, and berrying from temporary camps. They not only supported themselves during this season but also put up food for the colder seasons which would follow. Men would occasionally engage in wage labor during the summer season and can be viewed as a labor reserve.

Historically, the Fort Chipewyan Métis provided the labor force for the fur trade. While trapping and hunting were important to them, these activities were not the usual focus of their lifeway. Rather, they were an often necessary adjunct to their employment with the fur trader or missionary, who expected their Métis employees to provide a large measure of their own support from bush resources. They usually lived with their families in town, but marital and kinship ties with Indians resident in the bush were common. Métis who chose to hunt and trap and to live in the bush settlements were often considered to be Indian, or to be living "like Indians." By 1918, Scots Métis rather than Europeans were running the Fort Chipewyan Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) post. The differences between the Scots and French Métis revealed incipient class differences and related to their different cultures and roles within the fur trade labor force.

Ethnographic Endpoint

The former situation was radically altered within a period of approximately 40-45 years, the span of only two generations. The decade of 1955-65 was chosen as the end of the study because it was during those years that most Natives of the region finally abandoned the fur trade lifestyle for alternate forms of livelihood. These usually combined wage labor, social assistance and transfer payments, and hunting, fishing, and trapping. Where trapping and hunting had once been adequate to meet the needs of the Indians and the needs of the trade, now most people could afford to engage in these activities only if they had supplementary sources of income. The employment structure of the fur trade economy disappeared, leaving only a few jobs which were often filled by outsiders rather than Métis.

There were significant changes in the regional population during these years. There were many Euro-Canadian government administrators, representing outside agencies. Non-Native trappers had entered the region in large numbers, and they competed with local Natives for fur and game resources. A new group of Métis from the Lac La Biche area of Alberta moved to Lake Athabasca, where they lived in bush settlements and with social structures similar to those of the Indians. Finally, the Natives had been partitioned into those with access to Wood Buffalo National Park, created in 1922 and 1926, and those with access to that part of Alberta beyond the park boundaries. Group and individual trapping areas further restricted access to fur resources. All the Chipewyan Indians of the Fort Chipewyan band who were within the park had become Crees, a major legal and ethnic shift.

The forces and social relations of production were quite different from what they had been in 1918 for both Indians and Métis. Exploitative technology was almost completely controlled by non-Natives, but the personal relationship between trapper and trader and between employee and employer had disappeared. The trader had become a shopkeeper. He and other employers were usually transient and non-Native. They were no longer joined by social bonds to their clients or employees. While the resource base was still located in the bush, the emphasis was now on non-fur resources. Natives had little or no control over or unimpeded access to any of these resources, which were heavily regulated by agents of the federal and provincial governments. It was outsiders who now managed both fur and non-fur resources. They determined how Natives would be involved and therefore what types of hunting, fishing, trapping, and job opportunities would be available locally. The resource base on which the fur trade had been based was itself degraded. Job availability varied, and there was always a shortage of work. Jobs were usually poorly paid, and there were few or no long term benefits from even the better jobs.

With a few exceptions, the socio-territorial bands no longer existed. Most band members had left the bush and established themselves in Fort Chipewyan on a permanent basis in units ranging in size and composition from individuals and single-parent households to restricted extended families. The communal patters of sharing and exchange which characterized the local bands had also disappeared. Bush foods had become commodities, like furs, to be bought and sold except among close kin and friends. Patterns of income-earning and spending were highly individualized, even within families, which did not necessarily pool their financial resources. Economic differentiation among families developed, as some families enjoyed more income than others, while mechanisms which formerly ensured the redistribution of income no longer operated. Many people had been forced by the degradation of the traditional resource base and their restricted access to it into relations of dependency with various non-Native agents who were supposed to provide assistance, support, and guidance to their clients. The roles played by the agents undermined and replaced traditional patterns of authority and leadership within the Native communities.

This situation was not unique to Fort Chipewyan. It developed all over the Canadian north in the post-World War II period. A striking concomitant of this new dependent lifestyle was that Natives everywhere abandoned the bush and moved to the local trading posts, which were becoming government administrative centers, as was Fort Chipewyan, thereby ending the local autonomy which they had formerly possessed in the all-Native bush settlements. Explaining why people moved to town is a critical part of the problem of explaining the transformation in lifestyle and mode of production which distinguished the situation at the end of the first world war from that at the end of the second.

While the ethnographic baseline and endpoint are separated historically by less than 50 years, there were irreparable tears in the social fabric of Native life during this relatively brief interval. People who were once independent and self-supporting became in many instances dependent and impoverished. It is the goal of this study to define the processes of cultural and social change which created the post-war situation of dependence and loss of local autonomy, as evidenced in Native alienation from their resources, their commitment to wage labor, their reliance on government assistance, the fragmentation of their social units, and the shift in leadership to non-Natives.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is what June Nash calls the "...paradigm of integration of all people and cultures within a world capitalist system" (1981:393; emphasis in the original). It is this paradigm which guided this investigation of cultural and social change. It is particularly suitable for Fort Chipewyan, which was never characterized by a single culture and which has always been an outpost of capitalist ventures. From its beginnings it has been a plural or composite society, in which several culturally and linguistically distinct groupings co-existed in relation to the European fur trade to establish the social formation of the region. Radcliffe-Brown pointed the direction in which study of such plural societies should go in a lecture published in 1940 (1968; cf. Nash 1981:394):

> The study of composite societies, the description and analysis of the processes of change in them, is a complex and difficult task. The attempt to simplify it by considering the process

> as being one in which two or more 'cultures' interact... is simply a way of avoiding the reality. For what is happening in South Africa, for example, is not the interaction of British culture, Afrikander (of Boer) culture, Hottentot culture, various Bantu cultures and Indian culture, but *the interaction of individuals and groups within an established social structure which is itself in process of change*. What is happening in a Transkeian tribe, for example, can only be described by recognising that *the tribe has been incorporated into a wide political and economic structural system* [Radcliffe-Brown 1968:202; emphasis added].

At one level, regions and their inhabitants are incorporated into the political economies which characterize particular state societies through colonial and neo-colonial processes of external and internal expansion (cf. Balandier 1966; Sanders 1973). Several scholars, such as Miliband (1969), have considered the role of the state in supporting and maintaining its dominant economy and class structure, often at the expense of people who fall within its jurisdiction. The expansion of a state system is simultaneously the expansion of its dominant mode of production and political economy.

The Fort Chipewyan region first became part of the political and economic realm of Great Britain through the fur trade. It was incorporated into Britain's colonial offspring, the Canadian state, after 1870, when Canada acquired the HBC territories. On a grander scale, Britain and Canada are themselves integrated into inclusive political and economic systems, based on what Nash describes as "...an international division of labor mediated through trade exchanges without the need for a unified political structure" (1981:395). The historic expansion of the European exchange network and its transformation into the center or core of a world economy have been amply documented by historians such as Wallerstein (1974), Hobsbawm (1975), and Parry (1973). Wallerstein, in particular, has conceptualized the incorporation of non-

European peoples into the world economy as members of an economic periphery which is exploited by core areas through processes of unequal exchange.

Kay (1975) and Frank (1970) have explored how capitalism has developed at the direct expense of peripheral peoples, except for local elites. "Development" is viewed by them as a process which benefits only certain groups and causes a deterioration in the situation of others, a complementary process known as "underdevelopment." Analyses which focus on local impacts of the development of class-capitalism and the expansion of the capitalist states include those by Frank (1969) and C. Smith (1978) for Latin America, by Davis (1980) for the Amazon Basin, by Jorgensen (1971; 1978) for the western United States, by Elias (1975) for a region of northern Canada, and by writers such as Watkins (1975) and Laxer (1973a; 1973b) for Canada more generally.

The analytical tools for examining the impacts of the expansion of the world economy and capitalist state systems into Native areas which are characterized by pre-capitalist economies are provided by analysts who have focused on

> ...societies...as social formations - relational systems composed of superstructure and a determinant economic base which may itself be a complex articulation of more than a single mode of production [O'Laughlin 1975:350].

That is, the most important features of any society under this type of study are its mode or modes of production, or the configuration of the technical forces and social relations of production, which forms the "base" of that society, and its jural, political, and ideological relations, or the "superstructure," which allows for the mediation of conflicts and the reproduction of the system (cf. inter alia O'Laughlin 1975; Asch 1979; Terray 1972). Nash stresses that productive relations are embedded in exchange relations (1981:403). She suggests that we should therefore examine the ways in which peoples and societies that have become involved with one another through relations of exchange have articulated their modes of production. In this involvement, we cannot regard the peripheries as passive recipients of directives emanating from the core(s), but rather as regions with their own dynamics which themselves may affect the development of the capitalist systems which have incorporated them (Nash 1981:399; cf. C. Smith 1978). The roles of the HBC, Northwest Company, "free traders," government agents, and all-Native bush communities in the alteration of the fur trade relations in Fort Chipewyan are important here.

These guides to investigation mentioned above focus on the consequences for Native peoples of their incorporation into state systems based on capitalist political economies. Accordingly, they emphasize processual analysis and regional perspectives. They locate apparently isolated societies within larger social, economic, and political configurations. They consider points of conflict as well as cooperation among members within this society. Most importantly, they highlight the ways in which that society and its constituent parts produce the tools and behaviors necessary to reproduce itself, and the ways in which it mediates the various conflicts and contradictions among different segments of the society, such as kinship units, factions, ethnic groups, and classes.

THESIS

The thesis of this study follows from a consideration of the specific historical situation in the Fort Chipewyan region and from the theoretical perspectives which have been introduced above. Generally, the study relates the structural changes in the social formations in the region which occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries resulting from the incorporation of the region and its inhabitants as a periphery into an expanding world system of class-capitalism. Capitalism was introduced to the region beginning in the 17th and18th centuries by European fur traders and Indian middlement and later in the 19th and 20th centuries by various agents of the federal and provincial "states" of Canada and Alberta, respectively. The study focuses more closely on the period from 1918 to 1965, the historical interval when industrial capitalism replaced merchant capitalism in the region.

The study contends that the impoverishment, powerlessness, and dependency, and the related cultural and social changes which characterized the region in the 1955-65 decade were caused by the expansion of the Canadian state (including both federal and provincial government agencies) and its political economy and regulatory regime into the region after 1918. It is therefore a study of underdevelopment of the Fort Chipewyan region and peoples. The Canadian political economy was based on a capitalist mode of production which emphasized individual or monopoly ownership or control of the means of production by owners of profit-making business enterprises. Government agents from both levels of government imposed increasingly restrictive regulatory and administrative systems to encourage the intrusion of non-Native entrepreneurs into the region. They brought with them competing forms of land use and capitalist relations. They simultaneously hindered Native activities and eroded or terminated Native control of the land and its fur trade and subsistence resources.

At the same time, these interconnected economic and political developments after World War I undermined mercantilism and the fur trade in the region and led to its replacement by industrial capitalism after

World War II. The fur trade way of life became progressively more precarious after 1918, despite determined efforts by Natives to retain some measure of control over their land and communities. The failure of the fur trade in 1948 and the tenuousness of the traditional fur trade lifestyle coincided with renewed government and business initiatives in northern Alberta. These involved efforts by both federal and provincial jurisdictions to stimulate northern, provincial, and national "development" through the exploitation of non-fur resources and to solve Native economic problems by incorporating them into the national and provincial economies as wage laborers in new northern industries. Natives responded to the difficulties they faced and to the constraints imposed by government agents and corporate structures by reorienting their ways of life from those of the fur trade mode of production and both communal and individualized productive endeavors to a new mode of production based on a mixed economic base of intermittent wage labor, social assistance and government transfer payments, and hunting, fishing, and trapping. They became "proletarianized," though they have not yet become a full-fledged proletariat at this time. Most residents of the bush communities relocated to the town of Fort Chipewyan as an integral part of this process.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

The study will demonstrate the thesis by means of an ethnohistorical description of the events which occurred in the Fort Chipewyan region as governments and businesses encroached on the region and Native peoples were forced to contend with new restrictions on their use of the land and new institutional forces seeking to change their cultures. It is divided into eight chapters.

Chapter 2 elaborates the theoretical framework, while chapter 3 presents the ethnographic and institutional dimensions comprising the various baselines of the study. It depicts the region as it appeared on the eve of the major disruptions that began in 1918.

Chapters 4-6 detail these disruptions, their causes, and the consequent degradation of the resource base and the difficulties faced by the traditional Native occupants of the region for the period 1918 to 1948. Chapter 4 documents the loss of control over resources by Native peoples from the end of World War I to 1939. Both the federal and provincial governments expanded their control over and intervention into the activities of the region through the elaboration of regulatory systems designed to facilitate business ventures and economic "development" and to regulate access to land and resources. Although Natives sought to manage these problematic situations in a variety of often creative ways, the traditional fur trade economy became increasingly precarious during this period. Chapter 5 focuses on the crisis years of the 1940s, when this economy was in a state of near-collapse. Chapter 6 examines the persistence of the fur trade mode of production and its associated lifestyles, as well as the stresses to which it was subject.

Chapters 7-8 complete the discussion by considering the new role of the state in northern Alberta and the changes in the Native mode of production and lifestyle after World War II, from 1948 to 1965. Chapter 7 details the local consequences of the new pro-development context espoused by the federal and provincial governments. These involved disruptive entrepreneurial activities which exploited the physical and human resources of the region rather than "developed" them. These enterprises provided jobs and wages to people who desperately needed alternate sources of income because of the earlier erosion of their traditional fur trade economy. Chapter 8 explains the strategies used by Native peoples to deal with this new situation. On one level, they tried various political manoeuvers in attempts to regain some control over their lives. The futility of most of their efforts is shown by the fact that their fur trade mode of production was transformed into a proletarianized mode of production at this time, a very pragmatic strategy for coping with their economic dilemmas. This transformation entailed and was reflected in a major shift in settlement pattern, from winter residence in bush communities to year-round residence in Fort Chipewyan itself. This chapter examines the relocation process in considerable detail in order to sort out the roles of the various programs and other factors which have been suggested as causal.

Finally, chapter 9 is a conclusion which reiterates the main points of this analysis of the process of underdevelopment in the Fort Chipewyan region.

THE RESEARCH DATA

The data for this study came from both documentary materials and "memory ethnography." Both written and oral materials were collected, cross-tabulated, and critically evaluated. As the research problem and theoretical framework indicate, data collection centered on the definition of government policies, legislation, regulations, and enforcement procedures which affected the Fort Chipewyan region and its peoples after 1918. Of particular concern were restraints on Native access to traditional fur and game resources, as well as policies and structures which allowed and encouraged outside trappers and entrepreneurs to exploit the fur and non-fur resources of the region. Evidence was sought to define and explain the responses of Native peoples resident in the region and non-Native peoples both resident and outside the region to these altered circumstances, especially during the critical decade of the 1940s. Evidence was considered which related to changes in the exploitation of resources, changes in exchange patterns, and changes in social structure and settlement patterns.

"Memory ethnography" for historical information relies on a technique known as "upstreaming," in which older informants remember their culture and activities in earlier days (Carmack 1972:238). The collection of memories was done both casually and formally, and it built on my personal, long-term familiarity with the community. I lived in Fort Chipewyan for four months in 1968 doing a public service project. I paid brief visits in subsequent years. In 1975 I spent several weeks on the Athabasca River and in the town researching the historical uses of fire by Native residents, both Indian and Métis, which contributed directly to this study. This trip was followed in 1976 by similar research on the Fond du Lac River and in Black Lake, Saskatchewan, at the east end of Lake Athabasca. Thus, the field investigations for this study built on a foundation of information and friendships. They were conducted during a seven month visit in 1977 and an additional month in 1978, when I collected data through the traditional field method of participant observation and through engaging in formal interviews with people from all segments of Fort Chipewyan society.

Formal interviews were held with both Native and non-Native or Euro-Canadian individuals. The Natives who were interviewed were primarily elders, both men and women, who had been born in the years

1910 to 1925. They were adults during the period with which this study is concerned. They included members of all groups in the region: park and delta Chipewyans, Crees of different areas, and Lac La Biche, French, and Scots Métis. I had access to additional interviews with Fort Chipewyan Métis residents done by James Parker of the University of Alberta Archives (Parker 1978; 1979).

The non-Natives who were interviewed were Euro-Canadians who had played some role, directly or indirectly, in the region as missionaries, employees or managers of industries, or government agents. Some had been in the region in the early 1930s, while others entered the region in the post-war period, with the expansion of private enterprise and government agencies in the 1950s. Most formal interviews were tape-recorded. The originals or all tapes have been deposited in the University of Alberta Archives.

The information which each individual contributed was evaluated in terms of his/her social position and roles in the community, as well as his/her relationship to the researcher. Information on the same topic from different people was obtained where possible. Each version of the same event was compared and evaluated in terms of the personal information available about each informant and the written evidence.

The documentary evidence came from a variety of sources. Five archives were consulted for different materials. The Public Archives of Canada (PAC) contains the RG 85 series, which includes the Northern Administration and Wood Buffalo National Park records. This material was the main source of the formal data about the park. The RG 10 series on Indian Affairs was also consulted. These records were open only through 1948 when the research was done. The Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA) contains the daily journals of the Fort Chipewyan Indian Agents for most years from 1939 to 1960. The Archives of the Oblats de Marie Immaculée (AOMI) and the Archives of the Bishop of the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith (AB), both located in Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, were consulted for information relating to the development of educational institutions and programs in Fort Chipewyan and other documents relating to economic conditions in the region. I was allowed access to the genealogical records which the Oblates had compiled for the Fort Chipewyan region. The Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBC) were consulted for information relating to earlier fur trade history.

Additional materials came from government agencies. Of special importance were records on bison and other wildlife, trapping areas, and business enterprises which were available in Wood Buffalo National Park files in Fort Smith. The Fort Chipewyan Alberta Fish and Wildlife office had copies of applications for traplines outside the park which provided many trapline histories from the 1950s. Finally, the Office of the Director of Court Services (Attorney General of Alberta) provided the record of charges and convictions for Fort Chipewyan from 1919 to 1950. Other documents became available from time to time from individual sources.

In addition to this primary, unpublished data, there were ample published materials, both primary and secondary. The amount of data which was collected in the research was considerable, though not exhaustive. The study indicates where further research is warranted, particularly in the RG 10 series, HBC records, Province of Alberta government records, and church records (Roman Catholic and Anglican). The relevance of each piece of information is indicated in the text.

The sequence of the research was an important element in the sorts of data which were collected from Native and non-Native informants.

I entered the field in 1977 with considerable familiarity with the community and with the general process of the expansion of the Canadian government and entrepreneurs into the region, but without having done the intensive documentary investigation which I conducted after I left the field in 1978. I was therefore unaware of many points which I now consider to have been crucial to the history of the region and which have illuminated previously obscure comments. Conversely, informants pointed out directions which I pursued later in the various archives and which I might otherwise have ignored, such as the relations between Chipewyans and Crees in the park, which emerged as a major problem to be clarified and resolved.

NOTES

[1] Indians and Métis are jointly referred to as Native peoples in this study. The terms "Indian" and "Métis" initially reflected cultural and lifestyle differences which related to their different roles within the fur trade system. In 1899, when Native peoples in northern Alberta either signed Treaty 8 or took scrip, the term "Indian" acquired a legal status which could coincide with or vary from the cultural or ethnic status.

[2] The category of "Euro-Canadian" includes all non-Natives, though a few of these are of non-European background.

CHAPTER 2

STUDYING CULTURE CHANGE IN THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION: THEORETICAL GUIDELINES

The previous chapter pointed to the upheavals in Native life in the Fort Chipewyan region which occurred between the 1918 baseline of the study and the 1965 endpoint. It introduced the paradigm of the integration of all peoples and cultures into the system of world capitalism as the guide to the investigation and interpretation of these cultural and social changes. This chapter elaborates these theoretical perspectives as they relate to the Fort Chipewyan peoples.

It begins with a review of the paradigm of world capitalism and how the Fort Chipewyan region and its peoples fit into this theoretical construct. It outlines the role of the "state" in this world system. It then describes the capitalist mode of production and the modes of pre-capitalist production which it promoted in the Fort Chipewyan region.

THE PARADIGM OF WORLD CAPITALISM

The underlying premise of this paradigm is that capitalism is an inherently expanding mode of production; the reasons for this will be discussed in detail in a later section. Capitalism is based on the extraction of surplus value from people's labor. This value is accumulated as capital, which is continuously re-invested in profit-making enterprises (cf. *inter alia* Kay 1975). Wallerstein points out that for states,

> The ability to expand successfully is a function both of the ability to maintain relative social solidarity at home ...and the arrangements that can be made to use cheap labor far away [1974:85-86; emphasis in the original].

The historical expansion of capitalism has resulted in the incorporation of all peoples and cultures into an international or "world" social system. This system is based on economic relations characterized by "'the internationalization of production'" (Wolfe 1977:615), a consequent world-wide division of labor and structures of unequal exchange (cf. Wallerstein 1974; Kay 1975; Nash 1981). It comprehends sovereign states, which exercise legal control over their immediate territories and subjects (cf. Wallerstein 1974:67); investors and corporations; and the workers who produce the surplus value which is the basis of the system. Some of these workers are members of the smaller "tribal" social units with which this study is concerned. The integration among these entities and individuals at an international level is economic, not political, although it is "...reinforced to some extent by cultural links and...political arrangements" (Wallerstein 1974:15). Within each nation-state, the integration is simultaneously economic, political, and social (see next section).

Wallerstein has clarified the concept of a world-wide division of labor and its consequences for the economies of particular regions and their occupants:

> This division is not merely functional - that is occupational - but geographical. That is to say, the range of economic tasks is not evenly distributed throughout the world-system. In part this is the consequence of ecological considerations, to be sure. But for the most part, it is a function of the social organization of work, one which magnifies and legitimizes the ability of some groups within the system to exploit the labor of others, that is, to receive a larger share of the surplus [1974:349].

In other words,

> The division of a world-economy involves a hierarchy of occupational tasks, in which tasks requiring higher levels of skill and greater capitalization are reserved for higher-ranking areas [ibid.:350].

This division of labor and the differential distribution of capital investment and economic benefits divides the world system into three zones: the core, the semi-periphery, and the periphery (Wallerstein 1974; Nash 1981; C. Smith 1978). These zones "...contain different class structures, used different modes of labor control, and profited unequally from workings of the system" (Nash 1981:395-6). As the result of the historic development of European capitalism from its beginnings in the late 15th and early 16th centuries into its modern forms, all of the world's geographic regions today can be located conceptually in one of these three zones. The structure of regional capitalist development is described by Wallerstein (1974), Wolfe (1977), Nash (1981), and C. Smith (1978).

The core area was located originally in western Europe and still retains strong European ties. It is the core area which "...provides central articulation to a given division of labor..." (C. Smith 1978:581). Industry in core areas is highly capitalized and involves secondary processing rather than primary processing of raw materials. Labor is highly organized and well rewarded for its productive efforts. The core area is able to accumulate and invest capital profitably because of its relations with peripheral (including semi-peripheral) areas:

> ...the productive ability of the periphery usually is the means by which the development and competitive organization of the core comes into being [C. Smith 1978:581].

Wallerstein defines the periphery of a world economy as those regions in which "lower-ranking goods" are produced and labor is "less well rewarded" (1974:302). Smith adds that, in a periphery, the

> ...local economic infrastructure is poorly developed and yet commercial exchange with the economic core is well developed because the periphery plays a major role in the region's division of labor [C. Smith 1978:581].

A semi-periphery, as the term suggests, occupies an intermediate position between the core and periphery.

The historic geographical expansion of the world capitalist economy entailed trade with peoples who were not located in any of these three zones. These marginal areas jointly comprised an "external arena," which Wallterstein defines as "...those other world-systems with which a given world-economy has some kind of trade relationship, based primarily on the exchange of preciosities..." (1974:302; cf. C. Smith 1978:581) rather than essentials, which would lead to interdependency. That is, while trade was conducted between a world system and its external arena, the economic links were weak, and the core could not dominate its trading partners. As capitalism expanded, however, these marginal areas were transformed into peripheries (eg., Peru), semi-peripheries (eg., Australia), and even cores (eg., United States or Japan), according to the manner of their incorporation into the world economy and their subsequent growth and development. The means by which such incorporation was typically accomplished were various processes of colonization, in which "...economic exploitation is based on the seizure of political power..." (Balandier 1966:37), resulting in "'a population that produces all the wealth but does not share in its political or economic advantages and constitutes an oppressed "class"'" (ibid.:40); that is, a periphery.

To summarize, although the core, periphery, and semi-periphery are part of the overarching world economy, the structural relationships among zones result in the enrichment of the core zone at the expense of the peripheries, in a process known as underdevelopment. Marginal areas are usually incorporated into the world economy as peripheries, at least initially. Frank (1969) and Davis (1980) have illustrated this process in Latin America, and Jorgensen (1968, 1979) in the western United States. In each of these cases, the economic depression and outright poverty and the political powerlessness which characterizes the present situation of Amerindians is due to their long-standing integration into those economies, which have required Indian land and resources and occasionally Indian labor in the interest of economic growth and capital accumulation. These examples illustrate how the core develops at the direct expense of the periphery:

> Underdevelopment, rather than being a state of precapitalist backwardness, is instead a particular type of capitalist development. It is based on an international division of labor, articulated by the world capitalist market, that encourages economic growth in some countries and discourages it in others [C. Smith 1978:574-5].

Smith is, however, confusing economic "growth" with economic "development." K. J. Rea defines economic growth as

> ...an increase in the productive capacity of the economy of a region or community as measured, for example, by changes in the real value of goods or services produced in it [1976:25].

Economic development, on the other hand, involves

> ...a change in structure of an economy, particularly a change in the direction of less reliance on primary extractive activities such as farming, logging, and mining, and more on secondary manufacturing and processing for employment and income in the area [ibid.; emphasis in the original].

Thus, economic development means that a geographical region shifts from periphery to a zone that is more highly capitalized and that benefits more from its productive endeavors. Conversely, economic growth without development means that the region is producing greater surplus value which may be appropriated through processes of unequal exchange by the owners of these enterprises, who are generally located in the core. The extraction of such surplus value without the return of an equivalent level of benefits to the producers and the consequent blocking of local development lie at the heart of the process of underdevelopment and is fundamental to the relations between core and periphery. As one theorist explains, underdevelopment represents a

> ...dynamic distortion which diverts the potential productive power of the country [or region] towards objectives imposed by the logic of the world market [Vergopoulos 1978:451; emphasis deleted].

Smith's analysis is concerned with the dynamics of a peripheral region in Guatemala. She believes that most theorists, including Wallerstein, focus exclusively on the dynamics of the core, rather than considering those of the periphery. Their emphasis makes it appear that

> ...the whole dynamic of capitalism is in the core rather than the periphery, which is not the case. The dynamics of capitalism operate in the periphery as well, whether or not its production modes are capitalistic. Thus, by analyzing the economies of the peripheries, even subperipheries, one can better comprehend the total organization of capitalism [C. Smith 1978:577].

Nash agrees with Smith that the periphery should not be treated "...as a passive recipient of the dynamic penetration of the modernizing capitalist system" (Nash 1981:398-9), but one that is important to study both in its own right and for the light it sheds on the operation of world capitalism as a total system. While

> "precapitalist relations of production are subordinated and distorted by the impact of capitalism,...they too have their own dynamic which has an impact on capitalist development and may serve as the material base of the genesis of resistance to capitalism" [cited in Nash 1981: 399].

This study of the Fort Chipewyan region focuses on the dynamics of cultural and economic change within one such peripheral zone in northern

Canada. The Lake Athabasca region was terra incognita to Europeans until the advent of the northern fur trade in the 17th century , when it became part of Britain's "external arena," and its aboriginal inhabitants were drawn into trade for what were initially "preciosities." The colonizing agents were the HBC and the Northwest Company. The consolidation of the fur trade in this region involved the regularization of fur trade relations and patterns of exchange and the shift in trade from luxury items to necessities. The region thereby changed from one which was marginal to the world capitalist system to one which was incorporated as a periphery and whose occupants were part of the world-wide division of labor as producers of furs and consumers of manufactures.

The international development of world capitalism in the 19th century and the internal development of the capitalist economy of the colony of Canada led to the creation of a nation-state of Canada in 1867. The development of capitalism in Canada following Confederation reflected its relations with these core regions and with its own internal hinterlands, the western and northern territories. The decision-making centers of Canada may be viewed as semi-peripheral vis-à-vis Great Britain before World War II, but drawn into the United States economic sphere during and after that war (cf. inter alia Creighton 1976).

The Fort Chipewyan region is located squarely in the middle of the original Northwest Territory. The 20th century history of its cultural and social transformation was conditioned by the expansion and development of the system of world capitalism, the consequent expansion of the Canadian and provincial states into the region, the penetration of merchant capitalism and industrial capitalism into the region, and the dynamics of the pre-capitalist mode of production which characterized the fur trade economy established in the previous century.

THE ROLE OF THE STATE

This section outlines the relationship of the "state," a political-territorial entity, to the world capitalist system. Morton Fried defines a state as a level of sociopolitical organization based on "...the differentiated rights of access to basic resources" (1967:191, cf. p. 186), a system of hierarchically-ranked social classes (ibid.: 235, 238-9 and passim; cf. Keesing 1981:60), and a set of characteristic institutions which function to maintain "...general social order..." (Fried 1967:230):

> And at the heart of the problem of maintaining social order is the need to defend the central order of stratification - the differentiation of categories of population in terms of access to basic resources [ibid.].

It is the vertical class structure which divides "...those who produced from those who controlled the means of production, those who worked from those who ruled..." (Keesing 1981:61). It does so by means of institutions controlled by the ruling and upper classes relating to the definition of state membership, the definition of acceptable behavior and the control of violations of this code, the maintenance of sovereignty, and the mechanisms for the generation, appropriation, and redistribution of surplus production (Fried 1967:236-9; Keesing 1981:50, 187). These "...bureaucratic and repressive structures..." extend horizontally from their origin and concentration in urban centers (at least originally) into the countryside (Keesing 1981:61). Fried concludes that

> More than any form of human association, the state is devoted to expansion - of its population, of its territory, of its physical and ideological power [1967:240].

Nation-states emerged in western Europe as part of the process of the development of capitalism. They were funded by colonial enterprises, which are "...the differential expansion of national states..." (Price in Wolfe 1977:628). Although Wolfe has argued that the internationalization of production has created a new "...supranational level of integration..." in which "countries" are simply territorial units within the overreaching system (1977:616), elsewhere he agrees that "States are important actors in international systems and in the supranational system as well..." (1977:618), now as well as in the past several centuries. Klein commented on the role of the modern state in the world capitalist system: while on one level the multi-national corporation and the state do oppose each other,

> ...their conflict must be viewed as a dynamic tension which serves the interests of both. Both multinational corporation and nation-state, as at present constituted, fall within the rubric of the world capitalist market. ...
>
> It would be more fruitful to look at the multinational corporation as existing both within and between nation-states - not beyond them. ... Through its ability to administer civilly, tax, control social and political climates, and redistribute wealth, the nation-state serves to facilitate the multinational corporation's search for global profits [Klein in Wolfe 1977:623; cf. Stein in Wolfe 1977:629-630].

In the study of Fort Chipewyan, the expansion of the state, which Fried opined was inevitable and inexorable, is seen as simultaneously the expansion of its dominant mode of production, which in this case is capitalist. The state acts as capitalism's agent by creating conditions favorable for the production of surplus and the accumulation of capital (cf. Drover and Moscovitch 1981:15).

The institutions which allow the state to pursue these goals have been mentioned above and will be elaborated below, since they impose the constraints with which indigenous peoples on the periphery must deal. This discussion follows Miliband (1969), who has examined the role of the state in capitalist society, and Hutcheson (1973), who has extended

Miliband's arguments to the state of Canada.

Miliband explains that the "state" is actually an abstraction from six institutions which jointly "...constitute reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system" (1969:49). The first institution is the government, the political mediator and legislative element of the state. It controls land and resources, conditions of work, and levels of immigration. It creates "...the conditions for the maintenance of capitalism...," thereby providing for "...the achievement of a high rate of profit..." in business (Hutcheson 1973:154).

Secondly, Miliband says, the state includes an administrative element, which includes the state bureaucracy and other regulatory agencies (1969:50; cf. Hutcheson 1973:156). The state bureaucracy is an ally of "...existing economic and social elites" (ibid.:123).

The third institution of the state is its directly coercive apparatus, the military and police forces. Its leaders are typically "...men of high state and great influence..." (Miliband 1969:52; cf. Hutcheson 1973:156) who are committed to the "'national interest,'" which is generally defined as the maintenance of the status quo (Miliband 1969:130; cf. pp. 129-137).

Fourthly, there is the judiciary, which imposes negative sanctions on persons who have violated laws and regulations. The fifth institution comprises the local extensions of the central government which articulate the interests of the peripheries in which they exist. Finally, there are representative assemblies, which revolve around the government and are not truly independent.

Taken together, these six institutions (or rather, sets of institutions) comprise the state. The state elite consists of those individuals who occupy leading roles within each set of institutions. Miliband asserts that there is a ruling class in capitalist society, in that leaders of capitalist enterprises "...have generally been well represented in the political executive and in other parts of the state system as well..." (1969:55; cf. pp. 55-66). This interchangeability of personnel at the upper levels of business and governmental institutions has ensured a meshing of interests between the state and the multinational corporate structure, in Canada as well as in other nations.

A basic premise of this study is that in the Fort Chipewyan region the Canadian state (both federal and provincial entities) has acted primarily in the interests of the state's upper and privileged classes, and that as a capitalist state it has tried to create and maintain conditions favorable to the dominant capitalist mode of production. Government agents have therefore provided entrepreneurs access to resources which could be individually controlled (physically and legally). They have ensured an adequate supply of workers. Some have maintained law and order by fostering an acceptance of its legitimacy, which is preferable, and when necessary by force.

While theory about the nature of the state has most often dwelt on its monopoly on the use of force, which is certainly significant, of greater importance for Fort Chipewyan is the role of the state in the legitimization of the capitalist system. The smooth running of the system is facilitated by the general

> ...acceptance of a capitalist social order and of its values, an adaptation to its requirements, a rejection of alternatives to it...[Miliband 1969:182].

Fried says that each state has "...an ideology that consecrated its power and sanctioned its use" (1967:238). Miliband examines the specific roles of churches, government agents, and education in this process (1969).

Drover and Moscovitch discuss social welfare programs as forms of legitimation:

> The state takes a major role in the provision of such essential services as education and housing, and in the provision of support services such as unemployment insurance, welfare, family allowances, family and child social services, all aimed at ensuring the continued availability of a relatively cheap and quiescent labour force. ...
>
> ...the legitimation function...is a shared responsibility with institutions such as the church, the family, the schools, and the media [1981:16].

These institutions and their agents were the prime legitimating forces in the Fort Chipewyan region. Yet, historical events in the region indicate that local residents frequently challenged the system and their roles within it.

Keesing explains how such challenges may be interpreted. He suggests that political institutions should be viewed as aspects of the superstructure of the social formation (see next section), in that they provide the organization and means for the reproduction of the system of social and economic inequality among individuals and social classes. He criticizes the idea that "...political order is maintained within a society through an implicit covenant of consent regarding legitimate authority" (1981:295). He argues

> ...that a dominant class or group holds political power over a subordinate class or group because historical and economic circumstances have given them the means to do it. The very legitimacy of its authority is an ideology created by the politically powerful and imposed on the powerless: the notion of consent becomes meaningless. Legitimacy is not a social contract, but an instrument of power [ibid.].

The functioning of the state and its institutions and the legitimization of its structures of local inequality are important elements of this study. Of special significance is the development of state regulatory structures which facilitated the expansion of the capitalist system into the Fort Chipewyan region and inhibited the development of the local system. Technically, this process began when Canada became sovereign over the HBC territories in 1870. Canada and its local colonial offspring, the Province of Alberta, enacted legislation and devised regulations affecting northern Alberta, sent various agents into the region to enforce these constraints, and developed infrastructure which was designed to "open" the region to economic exploitation. The expansion of the capitalist system began in earnest in 1918, when the region was invaded by outsiders and regulatory structures became more restrictive and better enforced.

THE CAPITALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION AND ITS RELATION TO PRE-CAPITALIST MODES

The remaining sections of this chapter deal with the mechanics and processes of incorporation of the Fort Chipewyan region into the world capitalist system and with the development of the social formation of the region. The expansion of the system of world capitalism did not seek to transform all peoples into wage laborers in factories immediately. Instead, it expediently incorporated them into its system of exchanges and production. Nash points out that these pre-capitalist modes of production "...reinforce[d] capitalism by producing the subsistence needs of a labor force at lower cost" (1981:402). They often enhanced subsistence strategies. In the Fort Chipewyan region, capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production were present simultaneously and integrated through a variety of mechanisms. This economic and social complexity has continued into the present.

Since a social formation consists of modes of production and superstructure, these terms first will be defined as they are used in this study. Secondly, the main features of the aboriginal mode of production, that of the indigenous inhabitants of the region, will be outlined. Finally, the main features of the local capitalist mode of production will be discussed. It was the articulation of these distinctive productive modes which was responsible for transforming the region from an external arena to a periphery in the world capitalist system.

The final three sections will trace the major stages in the subsequent development of the social formation of the region. They will discuss three main factors: the local expansion and structure of capitalism, the local expansion of the nation-state, and the structure of the Native mode of production. Merchant capitalism and its relation to the fur trade mode of production will be considered first. Next, the process whereby mercantilism was undermined by more developed forms of capitalism and the accommodation of this process by the regulatory systems of the state will be outlined. Finally, the post-World War II situation, which was characterized by industrial capitalism and new state expansionary activities in the region, will be discussed for its consequences for a shift in the Native mode of production to a proletarianized form.

THE SOCIAL FORMATION: TOOLS OF ANALYSIS

The concepts of "mode of production" and "superstructure" are analytical tools in this analysis. They assume humans to be conscious and rational as they enter into relationships with one another in order to reproduce their material conditions and as they then seek to reproduce these social arrangements.

Mode of Production

Asch says about the mode of production,

> ...the process of material reproduction in human society cannot be understood merely by analyzing the "technical" aspects of production. Rather, ...the framework of analysis must include at the most fundamental level both the "physics" of production and the social relationships human beings enter into in order to motivate (or operate) the technical dimension of production [Asch 1979:88; cf. also Kay 1975:22; O'Laughlin 1975:346; Terray 1972:98-99].

"Mode of production" is defined accordingly. In this study it is considered to be "...a structure of material reproduction [that] incorporates both technical and social components..." (Asch 1979:88-89). This structure is the "base" of the society. The technical and social components can be defined more precisely as the forces of production and the social relations of production.

Underlying the concept of the forces of production is what Kay calls "the essence of material production...," which

> ...consists of the actions men take upon nature in their efforts to humanise it; its aim is to transform objects of little or no use in their original form into a condition where they can satisfy human needs [Kay 1975:13].

The forces of production are the means by which natural objects are transformed into products or commodities and acquire value. They involve a particular arrangement of labor and its means of production (the object or resources and the instruments or technology) as a technical process (O'Laughlin 1975:351, 360-1). They can be divided into three sets of factors: (1) the environment, or the resource base or raw materials necessary for production; (2) technology, or the subsistence technology and the infrastructure of production and circulation; and (3) labor, or the organization of labor in the productive process, especially the division of labor (Asch 1979:89; Kay 1975:13-21).

The social relations of production are an analysis of "...this same arrangement of traits in terms of relations of appropriation between persons..." (O'Laughlin 1975:351; cf. pp. 361-2). As Kay explains,

> The social dimension of production arises from the fact that when men engage in this activity they not only involve themselves in a relationship with nature, i.e. material production, but they also enter into relationships with each other. These relationships are the social relations of production [Kay 1975:21; emphasis deleted].
>
> The nature of these social relations of production can be most readily appreciated from the way in which they affect the direct producer who is directly responsible for the appropriation of the product from nature. They are directly expressed in his rights with regard to his own labour, to the means of production over which he works, and to what he produces. These rights have changed many times over in the course of history [ibid.].

That is, the relations of production are concerned with ownership and control of the means of production and of labor, which largely determine who benefits from productive efforts (cf. Terray 1972:100).

In one sense, the forces and social relations of production can be viewed as separate and independent sub-systems within the mode of production, which is the combination of the two (cf. O'Laughlin 1975:357 for a discussion of the debate on this matter): "...productive forces and relations of production are two conjoint forms of one and the same process, bringing the same factors into play" (Terray 1972:99). However, as Kay states, the social relations of production "engender" "...the different forms of material production..." (1975:22), and in turn the forces of production impose limits on the productive capacity of the society (cf. Asch 1979:90).

Superstructure

The economic and social base which is represented by one or more modes of production is that part of the social formation which provides for material reproduction. The other half of the societal equation comprises those institutions collectively termed the "superstructure." According to O'Laughlin,

> In social production people not only produce but also reproduce the conditions of their own existence. Since all production is production within a particular form of society, this means reproduction of labor, reproduction of the means of production, and reproduction of the relations of production [1975:348].

As with the mode of production, the superstructure is rooted in consciousness. However, because consciousness is conditioned by social reality,

> ...forms of consciousness not only represent but may also systematically misrepresent the social relations through which they are formed. ...
>
> ...the subject's view...is quite likely to be a mystification of underlying social relations [O'Laughlin 1975:348].

The value of such mystification is obvious when studying societies which are distinguished by social inequality and therefore characterized by potential or actual conflicts, or when there are antagonisms which result from contradictions between the forces and relations of production (cf. O'Laughlin 1975:348-9):

> The system reproduces itself, despite these contradictions, through the mediation of superstructure - juridico-political and ideological relations that suppress, displace, or misrepresent basic conflicts [O'Laughlin 1975:349; cf. Terray 1972:102].

Such structures persuade members of the society to recognize the legitimacy of the institutions of their society or force them to accept the situation rather than to challenge it. They undermine support for such challenges from other segments of the society. In short, the reproduction of a system of relations of production requires the support of and acquiescence to the status quo by the members of the society (cf. Miliband 1969:178).

Changes in the Social Formation

Asch has suggested that there are at least three factors which are necessary for the structural transformation of a mode of production. These are related to alterations of the superstructure and ideological elements. First, people must be aware that there is "...an alternate method of material reproduction..." (Asch 1979:93). Secondly, the possible new relations of production are restricted by the limits inherent in the forces of production (ibid.). Finally, there is a collective quality, which Asch terms "political power":

> ...at minimum all that is required is the general acceptance that the new relations of production provide a better solution to the problems of material reproduction than do the ones presently dominant [ibid.].

These developments may be internal, the result of contradictions operating within the society, or external, the result of forces impinging upon the society, or both. This study considers both the internal imperatives and conflicts of Native cultures and modes of production and the external factors relating to the expansion of capitalism and the Canadian state. Both sets of factors conditioned the changes in the social formation of the Fort Chipewyan region. As well, it looks at the role played by individual decision making in the larger process of societal change.

Applications

These concepts of base and superstructure and changes in them have direct implications for the research process and analysis of data in regard to Fort Chipewyan. First, it is necessary to study both the technical and social aspects of material production, the forces and relations of production of both capitalist and pre-capitalist modes, in order to understand how the Fort Chipewyan region was incorporated into the world capitalist system and local modes of production were articulated with the capitalist mode of production. Secondly, the institutions which sanctioned the relations of production and which provided for the perpetuation of the social arrangements of production and circulation of various necessary items, the superstructure, must also be delineated.

The elements of superstructure are misleading, however, and may misrepresent the situation. O'Laughlin explains the problem:

> ...if consciousness does not faithfully represent the social conditions of existence, then we can never fully understand these conditions through the representations of subjective consciousness [1975:348].

Or, as Keesing restates this dilemma,

> To look at a way of life through the eyes of native actors, in terms of cultural meanings and values, thus presents us with what are ultimately illusions. These cultural systems depict as eternal and cosmic what have been created by humans in real political and economic contexts and are constantly changing [Keesing 1981:370].

It is for this reason that O'Laughlin suggests that "One should therefore begin cultural interpretation with an historically formed social system and not with subjects" (1975:348). The interpretation of cultural institutions and behavior must consider factors beyond the immediate meanings given by the members of that culture to their customs. For Fort Chipewyan that means the historical and regional contexts must be investigated as well as immediate behavioral and ideological components. This approach accords well with the paradigm of world capitalism. It forces the researcher to look beyond the boundaries of a village or community to a larger national and international context which must be understood from both structural and processual perspectives.

THE ABORIGINAL MODE OF PRODUCTION

The aboriginal peoples of the Fort Chipewyan region in this study were Chipewyan and Cree Indians and possibly some Métis, living in egalitarian societies with no restrictions on access to the means of production (Fried 1967:58), a simple division of labor (ibid.:62), and mechanisms of reciprocity and sharing which prevented any individual or family "...from monopolistic possession" of goods (ibid.:65; cf. also pp. 34-36). Everyone could aspire to positions of prestige, which conferred authority but not coercive power (ibid.:32-34).

This traditional formulation has been recast by Marshall Sahlins as a domestic mode of production. Goods were produced only for their use-values, to be consumed directly by the producers themselves. They were exchanged only to obtain other use-values, not to produce profits (Sahlins 1974:83; Mandel 1967:20; Terray 1972:106), even in inter-"tribal" trade. It was "...an economy of production for use, for the livelihood of the producers" (Sahlins 1974:68-69). The producers "owned" and controlled the means of production, both the land and its resources and the technology necessary for production. The relations of production were egalitarian, with the "'local production group,'" the local band, serving as the unit of production and consumption (ibid.:76). This group varied in size from a single extended family to several families. It was the group which was "...collectively responsible..." for its own physical survival (Asch 1979:90; cf. Asch 1977:47).

Asch has outlined the domestic mode which characterized the aboriginal Mackenzie River Dene (1979:90-91, 1977:47-49). This structure can be applied to the aboriginal Chipewyan and Cree Indians of the Fort Chipewyan region, with allowances for variation in local resources and cultural traditions. The forces of production comprised (1) the raw materials, consisting of large and small game, fish, and plant species characteristic of the boreal forest, transitional treeline area, and in some regions the southern tundra. There was some difference in species availability from region to region, especially of large game - moose or caribou - and fur bearers (cf. McCormack 1975). This variation affected the early adjustments which Chipewyan Indians made to the demands of the fur trade. (2) Technology was dominated by snaring and entrapment techniques. However, because the people were not profit-oriented, they were under no constraints to strive to improve productivity. Typically, technology changed little over time (cf. Sahlins 1974:chp. 1). (3) The division of labor was relatively simple, with distinctions based on gender and generation. Travel was by foot and canoe, with limited use of dogs as pack animals, which meant that transport capacity was limited. People solved the "problem" of the variable availability of game, combined with their limited transportation abilities, by travelling through their territories in search of game, rather than by moving the game to a central camp.

Superstructural elements provided for the reproduction of this egalitarian system:

> These relations of production were expressed juridicially by a kinship system that, through the use of lateral extensions, incorporated the rights of local production group membership to all Slaveys (and indeed all Dene); an inheritance system that forbade the transmission of land, raw materials, technology and, indeed, "special" hunting knowledge from one generation to another; and a marriage system that required for its operation the continual outmovement of members of each local production group. It was expressed as well in an ideology that did not allow "sacred" knowledge to be transmitted from one human being to another [Asch 1979:91; emphasis in the original].

THE CAPITALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION

The capitalist mode of production is based on the production of commodities, goods to be sold, not consumed by the producers directly

(Sahlins 1974:83; Mandel 1967:10). It is characterized by the fact that producers do not own or control the means of production, which are monopolized by the "capitalists" or "bourgeoisie," who stand in opposition to the producers in a class relationship (Mandel 1967:31-34). The producers in a fully developed capitalist system are the "proletariat": the possess no means of earning a living other than their own labor, which they must sell in the marketplace. Labor itself thus becomes a commodity, with its value, like other commodities, based on the costs of its reproduction (Kay 1975:42). The relations of production are those of hierarchical class relations which obtain between the owners and the producers. The forces of production entail increasingly complex technology and division of labor. This complexity allows for greater productive efficiency and therefore the possibility of larger amounts of surplus value.

Kay points out that "...the principle of accumulation [is] already inherent in the commodity" (1975:66). All class societies produce more than the amount required by the producers for their immediate consumption (cf. Kay 1975:76). Capitalism is distinctive in that

> ...the surplus takes the form of surplus value, is appropriated by capital as profit and systematically ploughed back into production, for it is the nature of capital to expand [Kay 1975:56].

Both the rate of accumulation and the absolute amounts of surplus value increase over time (ibid.:71). There must be continual increases in investment and in the consequent realization of profits. It is these circuits of capital which fuel the expansion of the system and are responsible for the ascendence of industrial over merchant capital and the enlargement of the proletariat at the expense of other forms of labor and production. While industrial capital initially takes advantage of "...the world as it finds it with respect to technology and markets..." (ibid.), it must eventually "...develop and socialise the forces of production..." in order to maintain a constant rate of profit, which is predicated on a continual increase in the productivity of labor (ibid.:72). Capitalism may undertake such increased productivity by reorganizing labor or by changing the methods of production, or both (cf. Kay 1975:72-74). This process is accompanied by the concentration, centralization, and integration of production and capital (ibid.:76-78). Such features are responsible for the development of capitalism as a system, which includes "the transition from merchant to industrial capital..." (ibid.:77). This historical process is a critical aspect of this study. As capitalism matured internationally and within Canada, it led to new government activities and business ventures in the Fort Chipewyan region, which had major impacts on the Native residents and the local economy. These interrelated aspects are summarized in table 1, which delineates the broad states in the development of the social formation of the region.

MERCHANT CAPITALISM AND THE FUR TRADE MODE OF PRODUCTION 1821-1870

The form of capitalism which initially confronted Chipewyan and Cree Indians was mercantilism (table 1). Merchants are traders, the agents of the marketplace (Kay 1975:65). They do not engage in direct production and therefore cannot increase the value of the commodities which they buy and sell (ibid.:86). Merchants claim a portion of surplus value by engaging "...in non-equivalent or unequal exchange" (ibid.:87; emphasis deleted). The merchant buys goods from a vendor and sells them to a buyer, and "for any profit to be made one transaction, at least, must

WORLD CAPITALISM	LOCAL EXPANSION OF CAPITALISM AND THE NATION STATE	NATIVE MODE OF PRODUCTION
Mercantilist Expansion late 15th to 19th C. Development of European industries Long-distance trade of European manufactures for Native-produced commodities The internationalization of production and exchange: international division of labor	**External Arena 1682-1821** 1682 - HBC opens post in Cree territory 1697-1713 - French control of Hudson Bay 1717 - HBC opens post in Chipewyan territory 1778 - Peter Pond (NWC) opens post near Lake Athabasca 1791-1821 - HBC-NWC-XYC competition in the Lake Athabasca fur trade	**Aboriginal** Oriented to the production of items for personal and family use and some items (furs, food provisions) for trade on an irregular basis. Some provision of labor to traders, alson on an irregular basis. European commodities not yet critical to the forces of production, and European traders not yet able to enforce measures designed to encourage the regular production of furs.
Industrial Capitalism Expansion 19th to 20th C. Industrial capital supersedes merchant capital, which becomes subordinate and must seek to intensify production and/or cut costs in the periphery in order to maintain levels of profit. 1867 - Canada becomes a sovereign nation-state and a semi-periphery *vis-à-vis* Great Britain	**Peripheral Arena 1821-1965** 1. Preeminence of mercantilism and the fur trade 1821-1870 - HBC fur trade monopoly 2. Mercantilism undermined 1870-1948 1870 - Canada purchases HBC territories and begins the expansion of the capitalist mode of production into the Northwest 1899 - alienation of land through Treaty 8 and scrip 1918 - beginning of massive change in the social, economic, and political structures of the region 1918-1940s - mercantilist efforts to increase fur production and cut costs; invasion of outside trappers, miners, and commercial fishermen 1922/1926 - Wood Buffalo Park established 1937 - Chipewyan reserve established World War II - investment in infrastructure	**Fur Trade** Oriented to the production of items for both personal and family use and for trade on a regular basis. Socio-territorial bands, with winter residents in log cabin bush settlements. European commodities have replaced a large proportion of the technological inventory and are essential to the productive process. The traders are an element in the relations of production, but they do not intervene directly in the productive process.
Monopoly Capitalism and Neo-Imperialism World War II to Present Competitive capitalism replaced by monopoly capitalism, with industrial production controlled by multi-national corporations. Canada becomes a junior partner (semi-periphery) to the U.S. and assists in corporate searches for new sources of raw materials and the development of markets and labor. There is new interest in the resources of the Canadian north and other "unexploited" hinterlands.	3. Preeminence of industrial capital and exploitative industries 1948-present Investment by Canadian and Alberta governments in northern infrastructure; government discouragement of the fur trade. Exploitation of bison, lumber, and fish resources by outside entrepreneurs and government industries. Natives encouraged to work as laborers: a part-time labor force and labor reserve established by ca. 1955-1965.	**Proletarianized** Oriented to the production of items for personal and family use and sale of labor to produce income, which is used to support bush activities, including trapping. Highly individualized activities; disappearance of the socio-territorial bands as individuals and families leave the bush: fragmentation of the traditional social units.

Table 1. The Development of the Social Formation

take place at a price that is not equal to value" (Kay 1975:87).

Historically, it was merchant capital that "...created the framework of the world market and laid the foundations of underdevelopment as well as development" (Kay 1975:94). The reason for this situation was that, as a form of capitalism, it expanded and accumulated, which was predicated on an expansion of commodity production by the people with whom the merchants traded. Mercantilism therefore sought to transform ever-increasing numbers of people who, as in the Fort Chipewyan region, had formerly produced strictly for their immediate needs, into producers of commodities for exchange-value. The merchants then traded goods produced in one location for those produced in another. They made their profits from the rates of exchange, such as those expressed in "made beaver," and they simultaneously created a situation of inter-regional dependency. According to Kay, these developments "corrode" the pre-capitalist social formations and open "...the way for the reorganization of production upon a capitalist basis" (1975: 95; cf. p. 155; cf. Rothney 1975:78).

The point of articulation between fur trade merchant capitalism and the Indian domestic mode was the willingness of Indians to produce furs and provisions to exchange for European goods, as well as to work more directly for the traders on an occasional basis, and the reciprocal willingness of Europeans to enter into a range of social relations or transactions with the Indians. While Indians certainly wanted some European manufactures (cf. Murphy and Steward 1968:408; Helm and Damas 1963; Rothney 1975:60), it is simplistic to claim that their involvement in the trade as regular producers of fur was due primarily to a "... seemingly insatiable appetite..." (Murphy and Steward 1968:400) for these goods. To the contrary, the literature contains many examples of northern

Indians as diverse as the Chipewyan and Loucheux who had little use for most of the trade goods (cf. *inter alia* Hearne 1958:50-51, 176; Murray 1910:29; Rothney 1975:63-65). The "acculturative factor" of European manufactures was persuasive, not compulsive. Many Indians had to be induced to produce trade goods by methods other than trade.

These methods were related to the changes in the social formation of the region, as European traders and their employees entered into the relations of production of the Indian bands. There were two ways of participation in the economic life of the Indians. The first was "country marriage," marriages between Native women and traders *à la façon du pays* (W. Smith 1973; Van Kirk 1980; Brown 1976; 1980). As Van Kirk explains,

> The marriage of a fur trader and an Indian woman was not just a "private" affair; the bond thus created helped to advance trade relations with a new tribe, placing the Indian wife in the role of cultural liaison between the traders and her kin [1980:4].

Trappers and traders became affinal kinsmen (cf. Van Kirk 1980).

The second institution which linked Indians and Europeans was the extension of credit to individual trappers, a financing system which became extensive in the 19th century in the Fort Chipewyan region and persisted until the 1940s (cf. Tanner 1965; Rothney 1975:85-86; field journals). Tanner has discussed how credit or debt both defined and mediated the trade relationship. He pointed out that

> The obtaining of credit marked an important change in the economic life of a trapper. It indicated a long-term commitment to trapping as the major winter productive activity, and to dealings with a single trader, in order to exchange the results of this activity for some valued end [1965:46].

Each trapper had to deal personally and individually with the trader in the credit relationship; he could not negotiate his credit through a trading chief or Native middleman. Therefore, a trapper who accepted credit became linked to a particular trading post and was required to travel there at least twice yearly, once to obtain his fall trapping "outfit" and a second time to trade his furs (Tanner 1965:46). Credit stabilized a trapper's relations with the trader. It was a way of capitalizing the coming winter trapping, by providing the goods needed by trappers (ibid.:47). It stimulated trapping, because the trappers had to pay for their "purchases," despite HBC policy of periodically writing off bad debts. The trader could use credit to limit the sorts of goods available to trappers:

> By allowing only certain goods to be purchased on credit a trader was able to do more than just influence the buying habits of Indians along what he thought to be more prudent lines. He was also able to stress the importance of trapping as an activity, allowing only those supplies needed for a trapping expedition on credit. In this way he ultimately could increase the fur harvest of his district, on which most of his profit could be made [Tanner 1965:49].

To summarize,

> Credit established personal relations between the trader and his trappers, and gave the trader the advantage of having the trappers under an obligation to him. Through this relationship he was able to directly influence their economic life by personal intervention, and discourage activities which conflicted with trapping, such as winter hunting and fishing [ibid.:47-48].

Country marriages and creditor-debtor relations established social ties which transcended the purely economic aspect of exchange. As Sahlins suggests, it was "...social relations, not prices [that] connect up 'buyers' and 'sellers'" (1974:298; cf. Terray 1972:149). This involvement illustrates Kay's assertion that merchant capitalism "challenges" the social organization of production and thereby "...undermines the economic and social basis..." of the pre-capitalist society under study (1975:94). As Indian involvement in the fur trade became more regularized, Indians relied less "...on internal, group-oriented modes of production, and more and more on individual commercial transactions extending outside the tribe" (Rothney 1975:78). It was the development of the fur trade which transformed the Fort Chipewyan region from a marginal area into a periphery.

Because merchant capitalism was the dominant form of capitalism in the region until 1918, Indians and Métis were drawn into the capitalist system as producers of fur or suppliers of services, and commonly as both (cf. Pentland 1981:28; Judd 1980). The former represents a type of independent (simple or petty) commodity production of fur, foods, and goods (eg., snowshoes, moccasins) which were exchanged for European commodities. The latter was a form of wage-labor, although reimbursed by exchange credits rather than cash payments (Innis 1964:161, 240). The traders required a large labor force to work in various transportation capacities until the steamboats. As well, the traders were expected to support themselves from local food resources (although reliance on bush resources declined steadily as transportation systems improved throughout the 19th century) (cf. Parker 1967; Asch 1977:49, 51). Consequently, they needed workers at the post as provisioners and to manufacture the items needed for the operation and maintenance of the physical plant.

A rough attachment can be made between Indian ethnic and cultural status, independent production, and bush residence, with a similar attachment of Métis status, wage labor, and "town" residence. These correlations were only approximate, however, in that Indians and Métis both relied on bush subsistence activities, trapping, and wage labor to varying degrees, which are best represented as different modalities of a new fur trade mode of production. This productive mode may be divided into a "bush subsistence" or "traditional" sector and a "cash-trade goods" or "modern" sector (cf. Asch 1977:52), as long as it is recognized that these sectors were interdependent. The bush subsistence sector represented the persistence of the aboriginal economy, as transformed by its de facto incorporation into a capitalist system and the world market via the fur trade. The structure of this sector was highly dependent on the requirements of the trade and on the technology which it provided. This dependence increased in the 20th century, as people came to rely on new and often expensive items, such as rifles and outboard motors, for use in both hunting and trapping. The cash-trade goods sector was that part of the economy which involved exchanges with fur traders and occasional or frequent wage labor. The fur trade mode of production was therefore characterized by a new configuration of forces and relations of production, as well as new internal conflicts and contradictions, particularly between communal and individual activities.

Probably, Indians worked less often for wages because the traders were unwilling "...to admit them to more prestigious and remunerative posts" (Judd 1980:308). Moreover, it was to the traders' advantage to keep the Indians on the land rather than to displace them or to hire them to trap fur-bearers (cf. Rothney 1975:105-6; Judd 1980:307-8; Kahn 1975:149). Aside from considerations of expediency, it allowed the traders to bypass setting the value of the furs on the value of the labor which went into their production:

> ...labour in capitalist production is an element of cost, while in family economy it is simply a means (with no price attached) of satisfying family needs. If its price drops, it will be necessary to offer more in order to obtain the same monetary income as before [Vergopoulos 1978:452].

Indians comprised a labor reserve and served to restrain the demands of the workers.

While Métis were more commonly employed by the traders, they were rarely employed as officers, due to prejudice against their mixed-blood "race" rather than an objective evaluation of their capacities (cf. Judd 1980:310-313). They were hired instead as "servants," usually without contracts (unlike European servants), and they were restricted to the lower echelons of the employment hierarchy. Nevertheless, they were essential to the trade. Native-born sons and daughters of the traders were usually competent in bush activities, could speak various Native languages, as well as French and English, and had a foot in both cultural camps, all of which greatly facilitated the trade. Hiring Métis increased when the HBC encountered difficulties in getting and holding a European-recruited labor force. Their availability minimized labor costs for the merchants, especially after 1821, because Métis employees were commonly expected to provide a large measure of their own support from bush resources. They also did some trapping, which contributed to higher levels of fur production. Métis willingness to work could not be taken for granted. If employment conditions did not meet their expectations, most Métis could support themselves by hunting, fishing, and trapping, in an "Indian" lifestyle. Wage labor was based on close personal ties between officers and servants (cf. Pentland 1981:25). In other words, although the Métis and occasionally Indians were hired by the traders, they were not a true proletariat. Their relations with their employees were highly personalized, involving social bonds which went beyond the simple sale of labor. As a group, their ties to the land remained strong.

The Indian and Métis trapping economy in the Fort Chipewyan region, while still pre-capitalist and based on many of the same resources of the aboriginal period, was no longer a "total economy" (Asch 1977:49). The aboriginal mode of production had been transformed by its articulation with fur trade mercantilism to a fur trade mode of production characterized by three foci of economic activities: bush subsistence production, trapping, and wage labor. It was this mode of production which provided the productive base of the "contact-traditional horizon" of Helm and Damas (1963; cf. Helm and Leacock 1971:353). It appears to have possessed considerable elasticity, lasting approximately a century in the region, until the end of World War II.

THE UNDERMINING OF MERCANTILISM AND THE FUR TRADE MODE OF PRODUCTION 1870-1948

The reliance by Natives on resources or commodities obtained directly from the land and indirectly through trade left them vulnerable to limits imposed on their access to the resources in the bush, to changes in the availability of the species which they exploited, and to changes in the structure of the fur trade. These threats to their traditional livelihood originated in changes in the relationship between merchant and industrial capital which began in the 19th century and intensified in the 20th century in the economic core and in the Fort Chipewyan periphery (cf. table 1). By the end of the second world war, the fur trade era had ended and the fur trade mode of production was undermined to such a degree that it could no longer support the Native peoples, who developed a new mode of production based on a mixture of traditional hunting and trapping activities, wage labor, and social assistance. The reasons for these developments are outlined here.

Merchant capital was originally an independent form of capital which realized profits at both the Native and European ends of its circuit, through processes of unequal exchange. As industrial capital developed and consolidated its resources, it invested in mercantile operations, which became subordinated in Europe after about 1850 (cf. Kay 1975:99-123; Hobsbawm 1975). Industrial capital did not seek at that time to establish industrial relations of production in the "underdeveloped" world, which included the Fort Chipewyan periphery. Instead, it regarded such regions "...as a market not a sphere of direct investment and accumulation" (Kay 1975:100; cf. p. 101). They were also sources of important commodities, the raw materials used in the manufacturing process (ibid.:101). Merchant capital became the agent of industrial capital in this enterprise. Because it was subordinated to industrial capital, it had lost its source of profits at the European end of its exchange circuit. Consequently, "...it had to rely increasingly on the surplus it could extract abroad" (ibid.:123), which mean that it had

> ...to try to increase its profits abroad through ever-more unequal exchange: an initiative experienced in the underdeveloped world as a decline in the terms of trade [ibid.].

However, merchant capital is limited in its ability to increase the rate of exploitation indefinitely, because it does not control labor productivity directly. This contradiction between merchant capital acting on its own behalf and on the behalf of industrial capital led to a northern crisis and productive capital intervening directly in northern production, resulting in "...the inception of a capitalist mode of production proper in the underdeveloped world" (Kay 1975:124). Industrial capital by definition involves the direct application of capital to the productive process by buying labor and controlling the means of production on an individual or corporate basis. The use-value of labor can be realized only when "...the labourer is set to work in a manner laid down and supervised by the capitalist" (ibid.:70). Similarly, private entrepreneurs must be able to control the resources, technology, and facilities, collectively termed the means of production, through private ownership or exclusive licencing arrangements.

The nation-state of Canada was created in 1867 in order to create and maintain the conditions necessary for capitalist expansion and development in regions dominated by the fur trade and pre-capitalist economies. Hutcheson claims that this new state was to serve as "...an instrument of both the ruling class of the imperial country and the ruling class of Canada" (1973:170). It would establish the structures which would allow first for the expansion of trade on a transcontinental basis, with Canada as "'...a great holding company...'" (ibid.), since merchants sought to expand both commodity production and the market for commodities manufactured elsewhere. Accordingly, the Dominion's first achievement was to acquire the HBC territories in 1870, after which it introduced policies designed to encourage European settlement of the western plains and prairies. In the north, the sale of the HBC territories brought the HBC monopoly to an end. Free traders entered the Fort Chipewyan region, increasing the production of furs and contributing to greater instability of animal populations and the trade. Canada concentrated its energies on the expansion of trade networks until the end of World War II.

At the same time, industrial capital began to invest more directly in northern enterprises, especially in mining and oil ventures, following World War I. The limits of profitability through trade were reached in the 1930s, and after World War II large-scale industry would move into the Fort Chipewyan and other northern regions.

These economic developments were made possible by major changes in the political structures of the region. The first of these was the legitimization of Canadian sovereignty and control. Canada sought to extinguish aboriginal title to land which might be needed for industry and settlement through a series of treaties with Indians and payment of land or money scrip to Métis. Because the Dominion's emphasis was on settling its southern regions, this process was delayed in northern Alberta until after the Klondike gold rush of 1897-98. Treaty 8 was signed by the Fort Chipewyan Indians in 1899, and at the same time the Métis accepted scrip from the joint Scrip Commission.

Secondly, as the populations grew in the southern regions of the Northwest Territory, these regions sought to achieve fully responsible government. The Province of Alberta was created in 1905, although Ottawa continued to control Crown lands and most of its natural resources until 1930. Alberta became sufficiently powerful and autonomous to be considered a secondary state. It was sovereign over the lands and peoples within its boundaries, subject to the terms of the division of powers outlined in the British North America Act and to special conditions regarding status Indians outlined in the Indian Act.

Finally, both Canada and Alberta undertook various activities and implemented policies designed to facilitate the growth of industries in northern Alberta, including the Fort Chipewyan region. These included the development of transportation and communication infrastructure, to allow easier north-south movement of people and goods, and the imposition of restrictions on access to and control over the land and its resources by Native peoples and outsiders. These restrictions were elaborated in legislation and especially in regulations. They were enforced by agents of the provincial and federal governments.

One consequence of these government and business activities in the Fort Chipewyan region was the beginning in 1918 of a new phase of underdevelopment for both Native inhabitants and their traditional resource base. Natives found themselves forced to cope with vigorous competition for the deteriorating fur and food resources of the bush.

Native access to bush resources was restricted by the creation of a national park, an Indian reserve, and group and individual trapping areas. Individual and corporate entrepreneurs were encouraged to enter the region, even when their activities, especially those of White trapers, were in direct competition with Native land uses. As a result, Natives found it difficult to reproduce their material condition through the traditional combinations of hunting, fishing, trapping, and wage labor. The thirty year period from 1918 to 1948 eroded the fur trade mode of production and set the stage for its transformation after World War II.

INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM AND THE PROLETARIANIZED MODE OF PRODUCTION 1948-1965

The structure of capitalism in Canada continued to develop during World War II and in the post-war period, which saw industries eager to expand their markets into northern Canada, but especially to seek access to new sources of raw materials found there. The federal and provincial governments actively supported this process of industrial expansion. They invested directly in business ventures in the Fort Chipewyan region to exploit fish, lumber, and bison, and they encouraged Native peoples to leave the land, educate their children, and seek employment in the new industries.

Some Natives were displaced from the land directly. However, even those people who still enjoyed some access to traditional resources found that the deterioration of the resource base, the restrictions on its use, and the alterations in fur trade exchanges made it difficult for them to reproduce their material condition through the fur trade mode of production. Most Natives responded to the new industrialism of the region, as supported by regulation and as seen in local businesses, by resorting to a new mode of production oriented to a mixture of wage labor , government assistance, and traditional pursuits. Though few Fort Chipewyan Natives became exclusively proletarian, they were heavily proletarianized in their activities and outlook, and it affected the organization of the trapping and subsistence hunting and fishing they continued to do. Many Fort Chipewyan Natives could even be termed a "lumpenproletariat," in that they were alienated from their resource base but could not find regular adequate employment. It was this new proletarianized mode of production which was the productive base for Helm and Leacock's "government-industrial" stage of northern Native history (1971) and Helm's "government-commercial era" (Helm, Alliband, et al. 1975:325).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced several theoretical guidelines to the study of social, economic, and cultural change in the Fort Chipewyan region. They are predicated on the paradigm of a system of world capitalism, in which capitalism is viewed as inherently expansionary and which has incorporated all peoples and regions within its exchange network, through colonial processes. Such incorporation has resulted in the development of international, national, regional, and local social formations. These are studied through an analysis of their productive base, or mode(s) of production, and their superstructure, the institutions which provide for the reproduction of the relations of production.

The Fort Chipewyan region was incorporated as a periphery in the world capitalist system by fur traders, or merchants, who were based in

London and Montreal. It served as a market for European manufactures and as a source of raw materials for European factories. The traders did not seek to intervene in the productive process itself, other than to encourage the Natives of the region to produce large amounts of prime fur on a regular basis, and to consume commodities. Although many Natives, particularly Métis, became laborers more directly for the traders, their ties to the land were strong enough to preclude the formation of a true proletariat.

Merchant capital became subordinated to industrial capital in Europe by the mid 19th century. The affect of this new situation in Canada was that a new nation-state, the Dominion of Canada, was created out of some of the eastern Canadian colonies, in order to facilitate the expansion of markets, commodity production, and trade across the western plains to the Pacific and into the north to the Arctic. While Fort Chipewyan remained a periphery, it became subject to new constraints following Canada's purchase of the HBC territories. It became politically dominated by a nation-state for the first time. The state developed policies, legislation, and systems of regulation relating to access to and control over resources (the means of production), provision of labor, and maintenance of law and order. These were designed to create conditions favorable to the westward and northward expansion of the capitalist mode of production which dominated the Canadian state.

In the Fort Chipewyan region, the expansion of the capitalist mode of production had serious consequences after 1918. Native access to traditional fur and food resources was restricted, and outside trappers and entrepreneurs were allowed and even encouraged to enter the region. The result was the degradation of the traditional resource base and the undermining of the Native pre-capitalist fur trade mode of production between 1918 and 1948. The advent of industrial relations began locally in a significant way in 1948 and intensified through the 1950s and into the 1960s. This development, combined with the erosion of the fur trade and their traditional economy, led Natives to adopt a new, proletarianized mode of production after 1948. This transformation of their productive base freed the land for alternative uses by outside entrepreneurs and created a local labor force. However, as the theory about the internationalization of production indicates, labor in a periphery tends to be poorly organized and poorly rewarded for its efforts.

The following chapters of this study follow these theoretical guidelines about the roles played by the developing capitalist mode of production and the federal and provincial "states" in the Fort Chipewyan region, a periphery of the system of world capitalism. The indigenous inhabitants of the region are viewed as rational peoples whose pre-capitalist modes of production were use and livelihood rather than profit oriented. Their modes of production conditioned their responses to the constraints imposed by outsiders, as they attempted to control the factors governing their lives, particularly control over the means of production. The goal of this study is to explain the massive social, economic, and political transformations of Native life which occurred during the 20th century in order to account for the subjugation of the Native peoples of the region to European outsiders and for the impoverishment which distinguishes the region.

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASELINES: THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION 1918

The year 1918 was a turning point in the lives of the Native peoples of the Fort Chipewyan region. Aboriginal title had been extinguished in 1899 with the signing of Treaty 8 by Indians and the taking of land or money scrip by Métis. Nevertheless, Natives still enjoyed effective control of the land and its resources, and they were locally autonomous. There was only a handful of non-Natives present - fur traders, missionaries, and a few ineffectual government agents, yet they had established an institutional framework for the subsequent expansion of the Canadian and provincial states and for new commercial enterprises to replace fur trade mercantilism.

This chapter summarizes these developments. It portrays the region as it looked on the eve of the massive cultural, economic, and political disruption that followed the first world war. The first half of the chapter describes the local social formation. It focuses on the Native lifestyles in the bush and in town. These exemplified the different emphases or modalities of the fur trade mode of production. The Native lifeway in 1918 is the cultural baseline of the study. The second half of the chapter outlines the process of state expansion and the local elaboration of the institutional framework which would undermine the fur trade and this Native lifeway after 1918. The fur trade mercantilism and these new government activities are the institutional baseline of the study.

THE SOCIAL FORMATION

The Fort Chipewyan region is distinguished by a rich concentration of subarctic fur and food resources, especially in the Peace-Athabasca Delta, an area of possibly unparalleled resource concentration for the subarctic zone (cf. Carneiro 1974:424). It was for this reason and for its strategic location on transport routes that Fort Chipewyan became a major fur trade center by the end of the 18th century. It served the Chipewyan and Cree Indians who had expanded their territories into the region earlier in the century, displacing the aboriginal Beaver Indian inhabitants (cf. McCormack 1984 for a discussion of this process). The fur trade companies employed European, Métis, and Indian workers. The social formation was accordingly complex in terms of ethnicity, culture, and economy. There were two interlocking modes of production: the European capitalist mode, a manifestation of the world capitalist system, and the Native fur trade mode of production, which was rooted in the local synthesis of aboriginal cultures with fur trade requirements and constraints.

Robert Lowie described Fort Chipewyan in 1908 as "...polyglot and socially multi-faceted" (1959:33). Its population in that year was estimated to be about 150 people (Royal Northwest Mounted Police [RNWMP] 1909a:128), divided into three major groups: the most clearly defined was the Roman Catholic missionaries, which included the Oblate priests, mostly from France, and the lay brothers and Grey Nuns, mostly from Quebec. A second group consisted of the traders, the Anglican missionaries (the Anglican church was considered to be the "English" church), and government agents who resided in town. It included the HBC management and a variety of free-traders, some of whom were permanent, such as

Colin Fraser, though many were transient. At least some of the traders were Métis, including Pierre Mercredi, who was in charge of the HBC post (Cameron 1910:103-4; Lowie 1959:30). Government agents included the Royal Northwest Mounted Police (RNWMP) and possibly game guardians and fire rangers, but there was no resident Indian Agent (the nearest Agent was in Fort Smith). Finally, there were Scots and French Métis who formed the labor force of the settlement. They constituted nearly the total permanent population of Fort Chipewyan (cf. Lowie 1959:25; field journal 1977 III:30).

The traders at Fort Chipewyan were the agents of mercantilist companies based initially in London or Montreal and later in many southern localities. The missionaries were the agents of French and English religious institutions which supported values appropriate for a variety of capitalist ventures. Government agents represented a more developed, industrial capitalism which had yet to be introduced into the immediate region. These three categories represented three different aspects of the larger world system of capitalism. Their personnel were almost all non-Native, or "White." They were located in Fort Chipewyan in order to accomplish specific goals relating to the expansion of some aspect of the capitalist order, and they acted as mediators between Natives and the outside world in different ways.

Lowie described the Métis population as Cree and Chipewyan "breeds," with the European part "...mainly Orkney Island [Scots] and French" (1959:25). A letter written in 1894 by the Anglican Minister James R. Lucas described the children of the community who attended the Fort Chippewayan Day School as

> ...bona fide half-breeds, their grandmothers in each case being pure Indians.

> An exception must be made in the case of four children, whose mothers are pure Indian, and their fathers half-breeds, and so scarcely removed from the Indian [letter to the Indian Commissioner, 6 Sept. 1894, Public Archives of Canada (PAC) RG 10 v. 3934 file 118, 204].

Some of these Métis may have entered the region prior to the establishment of the post, while others came with the early traders. The Métis populations developed locally due to marriages between traders and their Métis employees and local Chipewyan and Cree women. Their livelihood was based on a mixed economy: they sold their labor to the traders and missionaries of Fort Chipewyan, but they also did subsistence hunting and fishing and produced furs for exchange. They usually lived in town. This economy was one expression of the fur trade mode of production and will be elaborated below.

The Natives who lived in the bush and who produced most of the furs for the trade were usually Indians or considered to be Indians. They were Chipewyans and Crees who were the descendents of those Indians who had remained in the region after 1821, when the HBC became a monopoly. By the second quarter of the 19th century (ca. 1825-1850), they had relinquished their former economic autonomy and relied instead on a new, mixed economy similar to that of the Métis: a combination of subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering; the production of fur and food commodities and other goods which they exchanged for European manufactures; and the occasional sale of labor directly to the trader or missionary. Their bush-based economy was another expression of the fur trade mode of production.

The Indians lived in kinship clusters of interrelated families, each with a good hunter and respected person "leading" the band and referred to as its "chief" or "headman." The bands were localized in the vicinity of the all-Native log cabin settlements they occupied in the winter, and each band controlled this hunting and trapping territory. The bands were ethnically segregated into Chipewyan and Cree bands, with Chipewyans more numerous in 1918 (cf. Mason 1946:7; Cameron 1910:94; letter from Geo. A. Mulloy to R. H. Campbell, 9 July 1913, PAC RG 85 v. 665 file 3912).

Enmity between Chipewyans and Crees existed as an important element of social organization in the bush. One Cree-Métis man who grew up in Fort Chipewyan and the vicinity at this time talked about how Cree and Chipewyan children would fight one another: "That was our fun," he recalled (field journal 1977). Duchaussois commented on relations between Chipewyan and Cree children:

> In the Indian school in which there are both Cree and Montagnais [Chipewyan][1] children, no greater penance can be inflicted on a little Cree boy than to put him next to a Montagnais girl, nothing more humiliating can be said to a little Cree girl than to tell her she will have to marry a Montagnais [1937:344].

More generally, Duchaussois asserted that

> There is a great difference of character between the Dénés [Chipewyans] and the Crees....He [Cree] is less simple than the Montagnais, less fickle, and less easy to convince. ...
>
> If the Déné is timid and always ready to run away from that traditional "enemy" who is never seen [the bushman?], the Cree, on the contrary, is bold, overbearing, quarrelsome, and not unusually spoiling for a fight [1937:344].

Duchaussois may have erred, however, in assessing the Chipewyan as "timid," since their public behavior, including that at the time of the Treaty 8 negotiations, was at times assertive and even aggressive on the part of some individuals. The category "Chipewyan" at Fort Chipewyan included many individuals who were culturally Métis, which may have resulted in intra-regional behavioral variation among Chipewyans which is difficult to reconstruct, but which would have affected reports on

"Chipewyan character."[2]

At this time, the ethnic boundaries among the three major categories of "Indian," "half-breed" or "Métis," and Euro-Canadian or "White" were open rather than impermeable, which complicates the picture of the social formation and a discussion of lifestyle. Cameron observed in 1908 that

> When a Frenchman marries an Indian woman he reverts to her scale of civilization [i.e., lifestyle]; when a Scot takes a native to wife he draws her up to his [1910:76].

Similarly, one Fort Chipewyan Métis man recalled that his uncles who married Chipewyan women stayed in the bush, while his father married a woman who followed the French culture, and they stayed in town (Parker 1979). Asked if the women made that decision, he replied that

> Oh yes, sure, the men didn't give a hoot. The men would rather have a son with them in the bush to help them, do the chores for them [Parker 1979].

Cameron quoted "...young McDonald, a full-blood [Chipewyan]..." at Fond du Lac:

> "I have two boys. The mother can have the younger son to help her in the house, and the priest can teach him to be a white man if he likes, but the other one goes with me, no school for him. I will make him a hunter [and Indian] like myself" [1910:135].

There is some confusion about the difference between "White" and "Métis" or "half-breed" at Fort Chipewyan, especially when Métis were referred to as following the White culture. These labels may have reflected the dual status differentiation which divided the Fort Chipewyan population into an "upper class" of traders and missionaries, who were assimilated into a "White" ethnic category, and a "lower class" of employees who were considered to be Métis, either Scots or French, or sometimes Chipewyan or Cree half-breeds. As Knight explains,

> "Metis"...was not a closed group. It may make some sense historically to conceive of Metis as that sector of the native population which had adapted to and relied upon on-going employment by external agencies, this being more fundamental than cultural or social distinctions between Metis and Indian [1978:173-4].

People who lived in the bush were considered to be "Indians," either Chipewyan or Cree. This division between Natives who lived in town and those who lived in the bush relates to the Scollons' suggestion that there was a trend "...to collapse all the functional ethnic differences" into a unique "bush culture" that contrasted with the "settlement culture" (Scollon and Scollon 1977:37). They conclude that the distinctions between Chipewyans and Crees by this time "...appear to have been emblematic only" (ibid.:38). What they see as a process of cultural convergence was facilitated by linguistic convergence among the four languages spoken in the region: Chipewyan, Cree, French, and English (R. Scollon 1979:32-35), enabling "a pragmatic multilingualism" (Scollon and Scollon 1977: 38).[3] Moreover, Cree was a regional lingua franca.

It appears that the social divisions in the Fort Chipewyan town and region were based not on "race" but on culture and occupation, though they were expressed in a racial idiom. The ethnic situation in 1918 among Indians and between Indians and Métis was analogous to Judith Nagata's plural society, in which

> Interethnic relations...consist largely of a series of dyadic or polyadic interactions between members of one group and another with but minimal reference to any superordinate, or dominate, or neutral area and with few implications of gradual or eventual social...convergence [1974:332].

LIFE IN THE BUSH

Hunting and Trapping

Native peoples who lived in the bush pursued a round of activities consisting of hunting, fishing, and trapping. In winter, they trapped and hunted. They lived in permanent residential communities of all-Native log cabin settlements which had grown in the region during the 19th century and by 1918 were present everywhere (cf. Bompas 1888:41; Jarvis 1898:163; Routledge 1899:66; Cody 1908:90; Mason 1946:21).

They used hunting territories and especially traplines that were controlled and "owned" by the local band and its individual trappers. Ernest Thompson Seton, who travelled through the region in 1907, observed,

> By an ancient, unwritten law the whole country is roughly divided among the hunters. Each has his own recognized hunting ground, usually a given river valley, that is his exclusive and hereditary property; another hunter may follow a wounded animal into it, but not begin a hunt there or set a trap upon it [1911:150-151; cf. p. 278; cf. also Pénard 1929:21-22].

One informant who was born in 1904 recalled that wherever a trapper "built" his "track," it would be respected by the other trappers (Parker 1979). Similar information from Pénard (relating to Chipewyan further to the east) suggests that the bands may have collectively allocated such territories to individuals and that "ownership" did not confer an exclusive right to its game resources. People could join a good hunter and

> ...hunt with him in his territory. Thus small bands were formed, and the owner of the territory obtained the position of chief, indicating to each one where he was to hunt. The furs taken by trap or rifle or arrow, as well as the pelts of moose and caribou, belonged to the one who had taken or killed the animal. The meat, however, belonged to the whole band and the chief made distribution of it... [Pénard 1929:21-22].

Band control of resource territories was less rigid than this description may imply, since individuals and families could join other bands. The local bands were allied to one another through kinship and affinal ties. Marriages between Chipewyans and Crees were almost certainly aimed at facilitating peaceful relations between former enemies and access to one another's territories.

In summer, the Natives packed their belongings in canoes or skiffs, or on their dogs' backs, and travelled through the bush, setting up temporary camps which were used as bases for fishing and moose hunting. Mason commented,

> Except for the few semicivilized sedentary natives at the forts the Indians keep continually on the move, seldom spending more than two weeks in one spot...[1946:17].
>
> ...[E]ven when traveling, the camp is generally pitched at a good spot so that the catch of fish may insure a food supply in event of failure in the chase [ibid.:18].

When travelling on foot in the bison area, they followed bison trails, which Graham described as "...the easiest and shortest way through forest and muskeg and between the heads of rivers" (1923:9). They may also have maintained trails through the use of controlled burning. In the summer, they used conical tents or tipis rather than log cabins. Seton, who travelled through the region in 1907, noted that most of the tipis were made of cotton, to save them from the dogs (1911), while Mason observed that "a canvas wall tent is often added to one side of the lodge when prosperity permits" (1946:20).

Many Natives had extensive gardens at their winter settlements, according to Felix Gibot (1979:160). Potatoes were the usual crop (field journals). Since they did not usually reside in these settlements during the summer, the gardens must have been planted in early summer, harvested in the fall, and visited irregularly during the growing season.

An important factor in the large number of game and fur-bearing animals prior to 1918 was the Native practice of controlled burning to create and maintain the habitats of desirable species. These habitats were characterized by vegetation in early stages of succession, especially grasses, herbs, and shrubs. With the exception of caribou, marten, and squirrels, nearly all animal species exploited then and now by local hunters flourish on such vegetation (McCormack 1975; Lewis 1977). Many Indians and Métis in the Fort Chipewyan-Fort Smith regions burned deliberately and carefully in order to propagate grasses and other early succession plants and thereby increase the numbers of animals in their hunting and trapping territories (cf. inter alis field journal 1975; Stefánsson 1913:10; RNWMP 1919b:182; "Extract from the progress report for the month of December, 1918, of work on the McMurray-Slave Fire Ranging District," PAC RG 39 v. 112 file 40308).

Mason, who visited the region in 1913, believed that the fur trade was of little importance to the Indians, despite his observations about their use of cloth wall tents and store-bought clothing (1946:21; cf. also Seton 1911:149):

> The method of subsistence has probably differed in no important feature since the time before white invasion. Small amounts of flour, raisins, and other commodities are issued at posts in return for fur, but these are generally regarded as luxuries and quickly consumed, leaving the native again dependent on his hunt. Tea and tobacco only are made to last until the return to the fort [Mason 1946:15].

He added that

> It is impracticable, however, to lay by a considerable supply of meat, and even a week's rations are seldom on hand. The living is from hand to mouth and yet there is seldom want or privation at the present time [ibid.:16].

Cameron contributed other information which showed that the Indians did, in fact, plan ahead for their subsistence needs: "The Chipewyan trapper eats at once, or dries for the future, every ounce of flesh he traps..." (1910:124). Informants recall that meat and fish surpluses were procured in the summer and fall, processed (dried, salted, or frozen), and cached for later use (field journals 1977; 1978).

Mason was misled about the importance of the fur trade to the Indians of the Fort Chipewyan region by his emphasis on trade for foodstuffs. The Indians were heavily involved in the fur trade,though not to purchase staple foods (cf. Anderson 1961:27). They trapped and traded furs in order to obtain the manufactured implements which had become the means of production; that is, the guns and ammunition, metal goods, nets, twine, sewing machines, fabric and clothing which Indians needed to continue hunting, fishing, trapping, and processing furs and other raw materials. As well, by 1908 they were purchasing what MacGregor calls "impractical luxuries" such as gramophones, watches, cheap jewelry, hats, and similar "senseless geegaws" (MacGregor 1974:142).[4]

The extent of their dependence on the fur trade is evident from reports about years when furs were scarce, leading to serious economic difficulties for the Indians. For example, Superintendent Constantine commented about the impact of the poor yield of the winter of 1906-07, when even good fur prices

> ...will not compensate the Indian, who relies to so great an extent on his annual fur catch for the necessities of life, and unless this coming season makes up for this, I fear there will be much distress among quite a number.
>
> ...[A]n Indian in his way will feel the grip of poverty equally as strong as his more enlightened and possibly more fortunate brother does in the centre of some large city...[Constantine 1908:26].

This economic context may explain Lowie's observations in 1908 about

Indian poverty in the Fort Chipewyan region. He noted that the Indians traded "peltries" "...for clothing and provisions; but, even with these supplies, considerable hardship is often encountered during the long winters" (1909:13):

> It is obvious that these Chipewyans were miserably poor.... [T]hey are the only Indians I ever met that did not consider an offer of food to a visitor a foregone conclusion [Lowie 1959:31].

A scarcity of fur in 1909 in the Mackenzie River region made it difficult for the Indians there to obtain credit, which meant that they could not obtain either nets or ammunition, resulting in increased privation (RNWMP 1909b:182). In 1914, Agent A. J. Bell at Fort Smith reported to the Director of Forestry that

> Owing to the serious condition of the Fur Trade amongst the Indian Population [of the bison area], extra precautions will be undertaken to protect the Buffalo from being killed this winter [21 Nov. 1914, PAC RG 85 V. 665 file 3911].

That is, when trade was bad, local Indians found it necessary to hunt the bison, who were protected by this date. There is no evidence that the government provided financial or other assitance to these distressed Indians. The burden of providing such assistance fell on the traders and the missionaries in these early years.

Wage Labor

The fur trade was not the only source of income for Natives oriented primarily to the bush. In an area often overlooked in a discussion of "traditional" subsistence and lifestyle, Indians as well as Métis were often heavily involved in wage labor (cf. Knight 1978:150). Mathewson points out that beginning in the 1850s, the Natives in the Fort Chipewyan region, especially Métis but also Indians, were frequently employed in many capacities by the traders. They replaced Europeans, who were unable or unwilling to "...cart fish, haul meat, carry express, or handle the boats..." (Mathewson 1974:44). Knight suggests that the competition which existed between the HBC and free traders after 1870 "...undoubtedly heightened the numbers of Indian employees" (1978:173), as it had in the period before 1821. A NWMP report for the Fort Smith region in 1898 states,

> We have had no trouble with the Indians this year; a growing inclination to make money, fostered by the Indian Department, who have given them every opportunity, has kept the able bodied men of most bands at work and between freighting and hay making, and the gathering of crops, most of their time has been fully occupied [North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) 1899:3].

In 1911, it was reported that "Indian guides will not travel during the summer at less than $3 per day with rations..." (letter from A. J. Bell, Govt. Agency, Fort Smith, to the Supt. of Forestry, Dept. of the Interior, 29 June 1911, PAC RG 85 v. 665 file 3911 pt. 1). Another letter written the same year stated that

> ...to pay one of them [Indians] or hire him to do any work requiring manual labor is simply money lost. They will not work unless they absolutely have to [letter from Geo. A. Mulloy to R. H. Campbell, Supt. of Forestry, Dept. of the Interior, 30 June 1911, PAC RG 85 v. 665 file 3911 pt. 1].

Anderson, writing about the James Bay Cree for the same period, said the Crees who became permanently employed were considered by other Indians to be "...lacking in vigour and initiative..." (1961:57). While Fort Chipewyan Indians may not have regarded wage labor so negatively, they evidently had a definite understanding of what their labor was worth, especially when it meant that they had to leave their families and curtail their summer subsistence activities.

Dual Strategies

What this discussion shows is that Natives living in the bush had two strategies for winter and summer livelihood. These strategies provided a pattern of adaptation to economic and environmental stresses. In winter, they trapped and hunted. When trapping was poor, they devoted more of their energies to subsistence hunting, an option that was available to them because of the continuing large numbers of game animals. In summer, they worked for wages and/or hunted and fished. When hunting and fishing were adequate and the winter's trapping had been successful, they were less interested in working for wages. If trapping had not been productive enough to meet their needs (to repay credit issued over the winter and to purchase supplies for the summer) or if summer fish and game were scarce, wage labor was an alternative. In other words, by 1918 wage labor may have been an alternative to trapping in the Indian production of exchange value. People may not have pursued this option actively because work for payment interfered with the production of subsistence items (food and hides) and possibly because it typically involved working under the personal direction of someone, usually a non-Native, non-relative.

The beginnings of the post World War II proletarianized mode of production can be seen in these strategies. After 1918, and especially after the mid-1940s, when game animal populations declined, Native access to game animals was restricted by legislation and regulations, and Native needs for material goods increased, they would turn increasingly to wage labor for their livelihood, although alternate employment would not always be available or adequate. It was these strategies and later economic contexts which provided the ingredients for later underdevelopment and impoverishment of peoples living in the bush.

Male-Female Relations

Most specific information about this topic for this period was written about Chipewyans. To the extent that Chipewyans and Crees had converged culturally, these descriptions may apply to both. Cameron wrote an extended comment on Chipewyan gender relations, based on her 1908 visit to Fort Chipewyan:

> In the woods as in the camp, the laborious work falls to the women. Lordly man kills the animal, and that is all. With her babies on her back or toddling by her side, the wife trails the game home on the hand-sled, and afterwards in camp she must dress the meat and preserve the skin [Cameron 1910: 124].
>
> The man sets his trap, and if the couple is childless his wife makes an independent line of snares [*ibid*.:126].
>
> The Chipewyan wife is the New Red Woman. We see in her the essential head of the household. No fur is sold to the trader, no yard or pound of goods bought, without her expressed consent. Indeed, the traders refuse to make a bargain of any kind with a Chipewyan man without the active approbation of the wife. When a Chipewyan family moves camp, it is Mrs. Chipewyan who directs the line of march [*ibid*.:132].

This picture of the control enjoyed by Chipewyan women over at least some aspects of distribution of goods as well as over domestic activities may reflect their traditional rights over food and hides which they have prepared or processed (cf. Sharp 1981:228-230). It is difficult to reconcile this view with this other view of Chipewyan male-female relations, mentioned by Duchaussois when he referred to Déné cruelty to their wives and daughters (1937:40). It is beyond the scope of this study to examine this topic in the detail which it deserves, but a few factors may be considered here briefly.

Sharp has discussed the asymmetry between Chipewyan men and women in symbolic terms, in which women are symbolically devalued (1981:221, 227, and *passim*). This situation may have changed for Chipewyan in the Fort Chipewyan region for several reasons. Egotistically, Duchaussois thought that the status of Chipewyan women had improved as one of the fruits of missionary labor (1928:196). He believed that they had been "rehabilitated" because of the example set by the Grey Nuns, who may have provided strong-willed role models for several generations of mission-raised girls (cf. Klein 1976:173-4 for a discussion of such role modeling among Tlingits). Another possible reason was Chipewyan marriage to Métis men, who had somewhat different views about women. The European model of cross-sex relations encouraged by the missionaries and portrayed by Euro-Canadians and by Métis, as well as the Cree model, all may have contributed to the transformation of Chipewyan female status, if, in fact, the aboriginal picture of this status was an accurate one. A final and equally important element in this issue may have been increased participation by Chipewyan women in hunting and trapping. Women often ran their own traplines, and a contemporary informant said that the Indian women in the bush all trapped "like men" (Parker 1979). They may have "owned" their fur production, though their husbands may have had to do the selling of furs and shopping at the post (cf. Parker 1979). As well, if their husbands spent much time in wage labor during the summer, the women would manage the camps and procure food without their assistance. Evidence from recent decades indicates that they were quite capable of doing this work. These issues will be elaborated in the following chapters, and chapter 8 will suggest that it was women who made many of the important decisions about settlement change after 1948. Cameron's passage is significant because it suggests that the female authority to make such decisions existed by 1918.

Disease

All the Native peoples of the region suffered greatly from illnesses of various sorts. Seton commented in Fort Smith, "I saw numberless other cases of dreadful, hopeless, devastating diseases, mostly of the white man's importation" (1911:94). Tuberculosis became epidemic in the 20th century. Natives resorted to the nursing Sister at the mission and traditional herbal and spiritual medicines, which were not effective against tuberculosis, influenza, and the host of childhood diseases that killed children and adults alike in the region. There was a hospital at Fort Smith. The federal government provided its "'usual'" grant in 1912 of $1.00 per day per hospital patient for a total of 1,000 days and $0.65 per day thereafter. "It was certainly not over-generous. In fact it was plainly inadequate...," recalled Bishop Breynat (1955:143). It benefited only those people who went to Fort Smith. The Birch River settlements would later be abandoned by their residents, because of death among their residents in the years following the 1918 baseline. The residence of Natives in permanent log cabins was often suggested as a factor responsible for the increased incidence of tuberculosis, but it is difficult to determine definite causes in this period of changing diet and other cultural changes associated with the accelerated fur trade of the early 20th century.

LIFE IN FORT CHIPEWYAN

Traders

The traders were entrepreneurs who traded manufactured goods imported from outside the region for locally produced furs and some provisions. The fur trade was conducted by extending credit and by "tripping." The Indians obtained fall "outfits" - the supplies and provisions they needed for the season's hunting and trapping activities - on the understanding that they would pay off this "advance" or debt with their winter furs and, occasionally, fish or meat provisions (which they sometimes bought back from the traders when they visited the post). There were few trading outposts; the major traders were located in Fort Chipewyan. They and their employees would go "tripping" to the bush camps and settlements, hauling groceries and visiting the people there in the hope of obtaining their fur. One Métis man recalled that

> During the months of February and March and April 1909 with my dog team I kept going around the Indian camps buying furs for the H.B.Co. and hauling goods for the Indians into their camps [Mercredi 1962:16].

There was considerable rivalry among the traders for the Indians' fur. Frank Russell commented in 1898,

> Then [before 1821], as now, the rivalry between the traders induced them to visit the Indian camps to procure furs and meat. During the winter preceding my visit each establishment kept men and dog teams ready to start at a moment's notice, whenever the hunters sent in a report that they had some "fur" [1898:58].

Occasionally, this competition resulted in illegal buying of fur by traders. In 1913, Inspector Conroy confirmed that the HBC was buying furs taken out of season, "...for fear that if they do not, the Indians might get into the habit of dealing with the free traders" (memo from ?, Dominion Lands Branch, to Mr. Harkin, 3 Jan. 1913, PAC RG 85 v. 665 file 3911 pt. 1).

During the summer, the traders replenished their stock of trade goods and sent out the furs they had collected. The larger trading companies owned their own steamers (cf. Slobodin 1966:93), which were another source of revenue.

The Oblate missionaries, who needed to be as self-sufficient as possible, also did some trading for furs and provisions, which they used to support themselves and their schools. Breynat described how some of the priests' rations, as well as other goods provided for trade, were used at Fond du Lac at the end of the 19th century "...to entice the caribou hunters and the natives to provide us with the maximum amount of dried meat, fat and pemican [sic]" for use by the Fond du Lac and Fort Chipewyan missions (1955:18). On one trip which he made to the hunting camps, Breynat "...brought back almost a thousand pounds of meat and fat" (ibid.:38).

Métis

Métis residents of Fort Chipewyan did subsistence hunting and trapping (cf. Parker 1979), but their trapping tended to be more sporadic than that of the Indians (Slobodin 1966:85). It was not the usual focus of their winter activities. Bush activities complemented their paid employment.

It was the Métis labor force which kept both the trading posts and the missions functioning. Knight provides an overview of the sorts of employment possibilities for this period:

> The larger trading posts retained farmworkers and livestock keepers, general handimen and labourers as well as a range of clerks and interpreters. There were blacksmiths, coopers, occasionally sailmakers and shipwrights, carpenters and yet more diverse tradesmen. There were domestic servants. A large body of canoemen, York Boat freighters, packers, seamen, mail runners and others were employed in the transport network [1978:172; cf. Slobodin 1966].

An autobiographical account by Alexis Victor Mercredi, born in 1886, describes the many jobs he had when he worked for the HBC and for the missionaries at Fort Chipewyan (1962). They can be divided into four major areas of activity: transport or freighting, trades work (manufacture of post necessities), domestic work, and provisioning. They comprised the service sector of the fur trade. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss these activities in detail. The area of provisioning warrants some additional comment here, however, because it took the Métis workers into the bush, where they exploited resources on which the Indians relied and which the federal and provincial governments had begun to regulate.

Mason mentioned that "...immense quantities [of waterfowl] are salted by the traders and missionaries for winter consumption..." in 1913 (1946:19). Cameron noted that by August 17, 1908, the Loutit "boys," who hunted for the HBC, had salted down 1,600 "waveys" (geese) for that winter's use (1910:325). Seton estimated that between 5,000 and 15,000 waveys, averaging 10,000 birds, were killed each fall (1911:277). As well, thousands of fish were put up each fall for human and dog food. The Métis maintained gardens for the traders and the missionaries (the Roman Catholic mission also had the labor of the children who were resident in the convent); these gardens produced root crops, especially potatoes (field journals). They used carefully controlled burning to produce good quality hay in the hay meadows (Howard Wylie, field journal 1975), for the horses and cattle at Fort Chipewyan.

In one sense, the Métis who were engaged in provisioning were doing subsistence hunting, but on a larger scale. This production was used to underwrite the fur trade system. It allowed traders and missionaries to economize on the costs of their operations. When resources became scarce, when capital costs increased, and when new regulations restricted the fall kill of migratory waterfowl and other animals, the traders and missionaries would be forced to improve the efficiency of their operations, which usually meant reducing their labor costs. Métis for whom jobs disappeared had only one viable option in the days of the fur trade: they could fall back on bush subsistence and trapping activities, which would bring them more directly in competition with the Indians living in the bush. Métis economic strategies complemented Indian strategies; both reflected the limited possibilities of the fur trade mode of production.

THE FUR TRADE MODE OF PRODUCTION

The distinctive configuration of forces and relations of production which comprised the fur trade mode of production reflected the roles played by both Indians and Métis in the fur trade of the region. All Native participants had to provide themselves with food and other subsistence items. Most Natives trapped, either regularly or occasionally, acting as independent commodity producers. Finally, Natives provided most of the labor which the traders and missionaries required to conduct the trade and maintain the post.

Forces of Production

The most obvious features of the fur trade mode of production were its resource base and technology. The resource base consisted of localized fur and game resources which were available in limited numbers. Natives used fire as a tool to create and maintain the prairies and other early successional habitats on which most species of fur trade and subsistence importance relied. The Natives who chose to live in the Fort Chipewyan region, especially the Chipewyan-speakers, made an ecologically significant transition, establishing themselves as distinct socio-territorial groups, using clearly defined and segregated areas for subsistence and residence. Their situation was similar to that of the eastern Montagnais, for whom

> The virtual completion of the shift in native economy from hunting for consumption to trapping for exchange was pre-

> sumably paralleled by the progressive stabilization of territories and individualization of trapping... [Leacock 1954:40].

This transition required increasing Native access to items of technology obtained only through trade. By 1918, items of European manufacture represented an important portion of the native technological inventory.

Labor power allocation was similar to that of the aboriginal mode of production, in that men and women undertook different and complementary fur trade and subsistence activities. However, both men and women trapped, though generally for different species and in different localities. Women's traplines were usually in the vicinity of their settlement, whereas men trapped at a greater distance, thereby increasing the productive capacities of the group. There was also a new regional division of labor represented by the concentration of some Natives, typically Indians, in trapping, and others, typically Métis, in wage labor as sources of exchange value.

Relations of Production

We can see three major aspects to the relations of production: the relations between traders and Natives, the relations among the various Native groups (especially those engaged in different productive activities), and the relations within each Native group. The causally critical element was the intervention of the trader in the relations of production, which was a feature for the fur trade mode of production as was the incorporation of new, European-derived technology for the forces of production. It was the traders who manipulated Native participation in both the fur trade and in wage labor opportunities. They stimulated the production of furs and provisions, and they designed the means for their appropriation for sale. They interfered in the subsistence productive process through their relations of exchange with the Natives. However, they did not seek to control the bush resources or to alter the Natives' use of those resources.

Government agents who enforced game and fire regulations became an element in the Natives' relations of production in the early 20th century. They sought to restrict Native access to some game and fur animals and to eliminate Native burning practices. While they were relatively unsuccessful in achieving these goals prior to 1918, they would play very important roles in the region in subsequent decades.

Bush resources were still controlled in 1918 by their Native users. The structure of control was related to the socioterritorial groupings. Items produced for immediate consumption might be redistributed within the local band, but production of furs and provisions for exchange (commodities) was individualized. Natives faced new contradictions which related to a mode of production based on commodity production, wage labor, and subsistence production. They were contradictions between internal and external leadership and control and between individual and communal activities in the productive process. Leacock, writing about the Montagnais, summarizes the nature of these conflicts:

> With production for trade,...the individual's most important ties, economically speaking, were transferred from within the band to without, and his objective relation to other band members changed from the co-operative to the competitive. With storable, transportable, and individually acquired supplies - principally flour and lard - as staple foods, the individual family becomes self-sufficient, and larger group living is not only superfluous in the struggle for existence but a positive hindrance in the personal acquisition of furs [1954:7; emphasis in the original].

There were potential conflicts between bush and town peoples. Though Indians and Métis were spatially segregated in residence, they interacted with one another in the bush (trapping, hunting, and fishing), in town, and in wage labor situations. The differences between them related to their social structures and cultures. Indian social relationships were egalitarian and involved a recognition of ethnic rather than class distinctions, while Métis social relationships involved both ethnic and class distinctions, in that employment in the service sector was divided into "management" and "workers." Also, Métis subsistence hunting, trapping, and provisioning activities were competitive with Indian exploitation of bush resources. Conversely, Indians may have competed with Métis for jobs. To the extent to which Indians served as a reserve labor force, they may have caused wages paid to Métis workers to remain low, which in turn would have forced Métis to intensify their hunting and trapping activities in the bush, which were both beneficial to the traders.

These potential conflicts were mediated by a variety of mechanisms. First, the multilingualism prevalent in the region and the wide-spread use of Cree meant that there was relatively easy communication among Natives. Secondly, there were many social links among Native communities, deriving especially from intermarriages. For example, two major Métis and Chipewyan families in the region share the same surname and originated from a founding pair of Scottish brothers or cousins, whose descendents married Métis and Chipewyan women (field journals; Archives of the Oblats de Marie Immaculée [AOMI] Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.; Parker 1979). Another source of these social ties may have been friendships among men who were jointly engaged in wage labor or in hunting, possibly defined as a type of fictive kinship. Lowie commented that "Everybody called everyone else Nistau [nistaw], which means 'brother-in-law' in Cree..." (1959:25). Cameron confirms this usage, saying that "nistow" "...is the vocative used by the Cree in speaking to anybody he feels friendly to"

(1910:56). Thirdly, social interaction in town may have been improved by participation in dances and handgames, keeping in mind Michael Asch's suggestion that a "successful" drum dance may be one that creates a sense of "we-ness" on the part of diverse participants (per. commun.). Finally, conflicts may not have intensified to the point where they may have caused problems because at this time there were ample bush resources for hunting and trapping and little need for Indians or Métis to worry about competition for these resources or for jobs.

This social and economic situation would change greatly after 1918. The causes of change were the new government agents, who were peripheral to the fur trade society and whose role was to regulate exploitation of various resources, and outside entrepreneurs, including White trappers, who introduced new exploitative patterns which competed with Native uses of the land. They introduced a developed capitalism which after 1918 would undermine the fur trade economy and eventually make its associated Native lifeways untenable. The framework which would allow these events was constructed in the period from 1870 to 1918, when Canada expanded into the lands which it had purchased from the HBC.

THE EXPANSION OF THE STATE

Canada acquired the HBC territories in 1870 and immediately began to plan for the development of the western plains and prairies, with land becoming the principal means of production in a more developed capitalism. Its strategies were to pass legislation and introduce regulations that would restrict Native access to traditional resources and allow outside entrepreneurs access to them for exploitation and developmental purposes, as well as to provide facilitating infrastructure.

1870-1899

The Fort Chipewyan region was affected almost immediately, though indirectly, as free traders entered the region to compete with the HBC for the trade of the Natives. The HBC responded by increasing its outposts and by improving its transportation system in order to reduce its operational costs. Local Natives became more sophisticated about the trade and exchange rates, and they began to produce more furs in order to obtain a greater range of commodities:

> Progress and the advance of civilization and opposition have created artificial and new wants, which even high prices cannot meet in an equally corresponding ratio, and the result is discontent, which is intensified by the insinuations of Free-traders, that but for them the Company would still be paying former rates [Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBC) B.39/e/11 1885:5d].

The fur trade and economies of trappers became more unstable. Overtrapping and overhunting led to food shortages by the early 1880s and outright starvation in the winter of 1887-88 (Zaslow 1971:59; Fumoleau 1975:37-38; Daniel 1979:56; MacGregor 1974:90). The instability of the trade and the heavy competition which developed led the HBC to limit the amount of credit it would extend, reserving it "...to trusty and honest Indians..." (HBC B.39/e/11 1885:4d). The situation stabilized by 1918, as the smaller and less efficient free traders left the region. While non-Native trappers had reached the fringes of the region by 1918, they were not yet in direct competition with resident trappers and hunters.

The federal government responded to the competition for wildlife throughout the Northwest by passing the Unorganized Territories Game Preservation Act in 1894. This legislation and the accompanying regulations prohibited any hunting of the endangered wood bison and established closed seasons for several other species (cf. Zaslow 1971:96). This act was the first direct governmental intervention into the lives of Natives of the region. It is significant that it was directed at their access to and control over resources.

The government was also interested in the non-fur resources of the region, especially the oil sands of the Athabasca River (Mair 1908; Chambers 1910; Fumoleau 1975:39-41; MacGregor 1974:84), but it did little to interest developers or regulate activities there until it was forced to intervene more directly in the north because of the Klondike gold rush of 1897-98. Hopeful gold seekers travelled through northern Alberta to the Yukon. The government responded to this new situation in two ways.

First, it sent NWMP patrols into the region and established outposts. The first patrol to Fort Chipewyan was in 1897 (Jarvis 1898), and the first outpost was established there in 1898 (cf. NWMP 1899:42). NWMP enforced Canadian law, charging individuals who had violated Ottawa's game and fire regulations. While they were not optimistic about their ability to ensure compliance with these laws, they did not expect major problems from the Indians, who "...have a wholesome dread of the police" (Routledge 1899:96).

Secondly, in 1899 the federal government moved to legitimate its actions in northern Alberta and "...to extend the machinery of governmental protection and control embodied in the Indian Treaty system" to Natives in the region by sending a treaty party and a simultaneous half-breed commission into what would later be northern Alberta (Zaslow 1971:224-5; cf. Treaty 8 1966). According to Mair, a member of the treaty party, the government had decided that "...this region, enormous in extent and rich in economic resources...should now be placed by treaty at the disposal of the Canadian people" (1908:22). The Natives had to be rendered peaceful through treaty or scrip so that the country could be safely opened up to "...settlement, immigration, trade, travel, mining, lumbering, and such other purposes as to Her Majesty may seem meet..." (Treaty 8 1966:10).

Natives at Fort Chipewyan, as elsewhere, were reluctant to sign the treaty: "'they believed that the making of a treaty would lead to interference with their hunting upon which they must depend for a living'" (cited in Daniel 1979:89). Felix Gibot of Fort Chipewyan recalls that the Indians were reassured that "No land will be restricted for you. You can make your living the way it suits you best" (Gibot 1979:157). They believed these promises and signed the treaty. An estimated total of 537 Indians took treaty (PAC RG 18 B1 v. 1435 no. 76 pt. 2), with the majority, 410, assigned to the Chipewyan band (B. Russell 1981:7). The political, social, and territorial reality of Chipewyan and Cree identity was established by the creation of Chipewyan and Cree bands in the treaty and in law, each with its own chief and headmen, band number, and prospective reserve land (Treaty 8 1966).

Little information is available about the Halfbreed Commission in Fort Chipewyan. Some Métis families believed that they, like the treaty Indians, would receive a yearly annuity (Sawchuk 1979:97-98; field journals), although the payment of land or money scrip was a one-time benefit. 132 scrips were issued at Fort Chipewyan, although the Métis population had been estimated in 1898 at 209 persons (Metis Assn. of Alberta 1979:408-9; cf. RG 18 vl v. 1435 no. 76 pt. 2). The scrip, worth $240 or 240 acres of land, was turned into money by selling it to scrip buyers, usually for a fraction of its value (Fumoleau 1975:76-77; Breynat 1948:218).

The decision to enter into treaty or take scrip had several consequences which were important for the subsequent history of the region and its inhabitants. First, the community of Natives, with equal rights in and access to the land and its resources, was divided into two groups: one that had signed away all rights to the land (received scrip) and one that had retained some rights to resources on unoccupied Crown lands and on reserved lands (took treaty). This second group, status Indians, was further divided into two groups: the Cree band and the Chipewyan band. At some future date, each was entitled to select a reserve. While the creation of two bands at Fort Chipewyan reflected the social-ethnic situation in 1899, the band form became a rigid structure which would cause difficulties for the Indians following the creation of Wood Buffalo Park in the 1920s.

Secondly, the treaty Indians, both Chipewyan and Cree, believed that they had retained the right to hunt, fish, and trap as freely as if they had never signed the treaty. However, the promises made by the treaty commissioners to the Indians were never formally written into the treaty itself; they remained only verbal commitments (cf. Breynat 1948: 208; Fumoleau 1975:79). In the future, the Indians would view the imposition of game regulations as violations of the treaty promises.

Finally, the treaty stated that the Indians gave up all claims to the land. It is important to note that they maintain that they were never asked to sell or cede the land. Felix Gibot believed,

> The white man never bought the land. If he had bought it, there would have been large sums of money involved in order for him to claim the land [1979:159].

Justice W. G. Morrow's judgment regarding the caveat lodged by chiefs of the NWT states that there is a reasonable case to be made "...that the two treaties [8 and 11] are not effective instruments to terminate their aboriginal rights..." (Morrow 1973:44), because of the overwhelming evidence that the Indians believed that they had been given assurances "in perpetuity" "...that their traditional use of the lands was not affected" by their signing of the treaty (ibid.:45), despite the unequivocal wording of the document itself. Nevertheless, after 1899 the government would proceed under the assumption that it had acquired the clear cession and control of the land in the Fort Chipewyan region, which was its intent in the treaty process. Although the creation of parks was not mentioned specifically, the phrasing of the treaty provided for the expropriation of land for their eventual establishment, should the government decide to do so, as with Wood Buffalo Park in the 1920s.

1899-1918

The federal presence continued to expand after the signing of the treaty, in accord with what Zaslow calls "...the Canadian regulated frontier tradition..." (1971:140). Through several measures, the federal government increased its administrative control over the Fort Chipewyan region. The NWMP not only enforced the law, but also became the government's local administrators, especially since there was no resident Indian Agent until the 1930s. Specialized "Buffalo Rangers" were sent to the region in 1911 (Wood Buffalo National Park [WBNP] Mitchell 1976:4), and the following year Maxwell Graham recommended that a park or game preserve be established in the bison area, with no hunting or trapping allowed, except for "noxious animals" (memo from Graham to Mr. Harkin, 7 Dec. 1912, PAC RG 85 v. 665 file 3911 pt. 1). By 1912 a system of fire rangers had been organized. They patrolled northern

Alberta, including the Fort Chipewyan region (cf. various entries PAC RG 39 v. 112 file 40308).

These federal agents played somewhat perfunctory roles in the Fort Chipewyan region in this period. They often failed to live up to the expectations of their superiors. However, their presence in the region contributed to restricted hunting and trapping activities, to the elimination of some Native burning practices, and to greater Native acceptance of governmental authority. They jointly established a firm Canadian presence in the region and began "...to create a uniform, effective, universal system of administrative control in the field" (Zaslow 1971:227).

The aggressive federal development policies for the western plains led to sufficient population and economic growth that in 1905 the government created the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The older district of Athabasca was divided between them. Alberta became a new and important actor in the Fort Chipewyan region. As a secondary state, it wanted to open its northern regions for development of farms and other resources. Accordingly, in 1909 Premier Rutherford announced that his government would sponsor railway construction to the Peace River farming country and to the oil-rich lower Athabasca region (Richards and Pratt 1979:18; Thomas 1979:7). There would also be a "pioneer road" built from Edmonton to Fort McMurray, "...connecting the settled portions of the province with the lake and river system of the north" (Thomas 1979:7).

The Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia Railway was constructed as far as the east end of Lesser Slave Lake by 1914 and to Peace River Crossing or Landing in 1916. The Alberta and Great Waterways Railway was begun in 1912, but it was not completed to Waterways, near

Fort McMurray, until 1921 (MacGregor 1974:117, 148; Kitto 1930:60; Innis 1933:83). Railway construction had three consequences for the Fort Chipewyan region.

First, the new routes bypassed the formidable Grand Rapids; freight could be shipped directly to Peace River or Waterways (MacGregor 1974:117, 125). Athabasca Landing declined in the amount of freight it handled, and most jobs ended for the scowmen, who were mainly Métis from the Lac La Biche region. Secondly, this new transport system made it easier for homesteaders to move into the Peace River country (cf. Fumoleau 1975:105). They began taking up homesteads there in large numbers after 1912 (Kitto 1930:28). After 1918, this population would be one source of the trappers who moved into the Fort Chipewyan region (field journal 1977 V:31). Thirdly, there was greater access to the Fort McMurray area for individuals interested in resource exploration (oil and salt) (MacGregor 1974:157) and in trapping (ibid.:128). While most of the non-Natives in Fort McMurray were employed by the oil drilling entrepreneurs, the two to three years prior to 1914 saw non-Native trappers begin to encroach upon the southern edge of the Fort Chipewyan region.

In addition to developing infrastructure, the Alberta government implemented restrictions on hunting and trapping through provincial legislation. The first Game Act was passed in 1907. It superceded the federal game legislation passed in 1894 and lasted (with amendments) until the 1970 Wildlife Act was passed. The provisions of the Game Act and its derivative regulations were enforced by "Game Guardians," provincial rangers analogous to the federal buffalo and fire rangers. This force was established in 1906 (Government of Alberta 1909:105).[5] Although treaty Indians enjoyed rights under the Indian Act and Treaty

8 to pursue their traditional hunting and trapping livelihood, Alberta sought to bring them under provincial control by using the Game Guardians to supervise their activities as well as those of non-treaty Natives and by requiring them to obtain licences (Government of Alberta 1914:195).

CONCLUSION

The fur trade continued to dominate the Fort Chipewyan region throughout the 50 year period summarized by this chapter. The discussion has outlined the process by which the fur trade mercantilist framework for Native-non-Native interaction began to be replaced in the region by a new framework defined directly by an expansionary nation-state and its equally expansionary provincial offspring. They sought to expand the possibilities for profitable investment by developing western Canada as a source of raw materials and a market for eastern manufactures. They encouraged agricultural settlement by Europeans and the introduction of new extractive enterprises. Both land uses conflicted with traditional Indian and Métis hunting and trapping activities. In effect, the expansion of the state began a process of impaction of the Fort Chipewyan "habitat":

> an impacted habitat exists when people cannot avoid production quotas, rents, and taxes by fleeing to virgin areas where they can work less and eat as much [Harris 1975:379; cf. Carneiro 1970].

These initiatives by governments and entrepreneurs were bolstered by new political and juridical structures.

The immediate impact of this new framework was the stationing of various government agents in the region to administer and enforce new legislation and regulations, especially those relating to "law and order" and to fur and game resources. It is important to note that Natives, especially status Indians, were politically disenfranchised, and they were rarely hired as enforcement agents except at the most humble levels. How the provincial and federal agents articulated their respective activities is unknown for this early period, except for the fact that the NWMP/RNWMP[6] were ex-officio game officers. It can be assumed that until 1918, however, the presence of these agents was more symbolic in impact than effective in altering subsistence and trapping activities of the Native peoples of the Fort Chipewyan region. The agents were few in number and faced great difficulties in making frequent patrols. Nevertheless, they established the sovereignty of the federal and provincial states through their enforcement activities. Thus, they became a new, limiting element in the relations of production of the Native peoples. This role would enlarge considerably after 1918.

NOTES

[1] Chipewyans were often referred to as "Montagnais," but they should not be confused with the Montagnais of the eastern subarctic.

[2] The confusion between ethnicity and culture in the region becomes evident when one learns that Chief Alexandre Laviolette was, in fact, no Indian, but "...d'origine canadienne incontestée..." (Missions de la Congrégation des Missionaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée 1911:484). One Fort Chipewyan resident described him as blond, with a beard, and married to a Chipewyan woman, though he spoke French and virtually no Chipewyan (Parker 1979). It was this French Métis whom the treaty party named as Chipewyan chief in 1899.

[3] However, only some individuals were bilingual, though it is

difficult to evaluate the degree of linguistic comprehension and use that marked a bilingual person if, as S. Scollon suggests, people in the region have a greater tolerance of lack of comprehension than do outside English speakers. She mentions, moreover, that the ability to speak the local languages is sometimes attributed to persons who do not have this ability (S. Scollon 1977:68). It is certain that as recently as the 1940s, many Chipewyans could not speak Cree, nor Crees, Chipewyan. For example, one Chipewyan woman who was married in 1942 to a Cree man said that before she married, she spoke only Chipewyan and understood very little Cree. It took three years before she felt she could speak Cree. Her husband understood Chipewyan, she said, but he could speak only Cree (field journal 1977).

[4] Anderson lists the "...quite extensive variety of merchandise offered in the [HBC] store" at Moose Factory (1961:23). Since the HBC operations were standardized, the store at Fort Chipewyan should have had a similar inventory:

> There were builders' hardware, wood-burning space heaters and cooking ranges, kitchen utensils, chinaware, cutlery, drapery material of all kinds, bedding material, and of course the famous H B C Point Blankets. In fact, the householder could buy anything and everything necessary to setting up a comfortable home at Moose Factory. The man of the house could buy himself a suit of clothes, shirts, underwear, a straw boater or felt hat, dress or work boots, men's accessories and a gold-plated Waltham watch with matching chain to spread across his chest. His wife could buy a boater-style black hat, button boots, woollen stockings, blouses and limited lingerie (most of which in 1910 was home-made in any case). Ready-made dresses were not stocked, which need not surprise us, because in that day it was common practice even in the white man's country for ladies to make most of their own dresses and the accompanying voluminous layers of petticoats reaching to the ankle. As for children, practically all of their clothing was home-make. Items for the homemaker were naturally prominent. The store carried portable and table sewing machines, furnishings and a great variety of staple yard goods, from canvas tenting material to bed ticking, from shirting to fine silks and satins [1961:23].

[5] This material on Game Guardians was researched by James Parker.

[6] The prefix "Royal" was added in 1904 (RCMP n.d.:n.p.).

INDIANS LOSE CONTROL 1918 TO 1948

Chapter 3 outlined the creation of a framework for government and business expansion into northern Canada and the Fort Chipewyan region prior to World War I. The possibilities of this framework for a strengthened government presence and for exploitation of northern resources were realized in the years from 1918 to 1948. R. A. J. Phillips has interpreted this period as one of northern decline from the promise of the gold rush and earlier optimism about northern resource development (1967:142-158). However, the north did experience economic growth throughout these years, though it tended to be episodic and uneven rather than sustained, and to occur largely through private investment rather than through the active government encouragement and support which would signify the post World War II era (cf. Rea 1968; McCormack 1980:145-6).

The next three chapters will show that the expansion of Canadian government and business interests into the Fort Chipewyan region after 1918 was antithetical to the interests of the fur trade economy and the Natives' participation in it. High fur prices, new extractive industry, new Euro-Canadian settlement, and intensified mercantilism were interconnected activities which resulted in a resource base which was impacted, depleted, and even destroyed, and its use regulated by non-Natives; that is, by the agents of the federal and provincial states. Natives were subjected to a new process of underdevelopment which involved the intervention of the state not only in the sphere of exchange, but also in the sphere of production. These new enterprises required the legal and occasionally the physical separation of Natives from the land. Natives were increasingly alienated from their resource base against their will, and they found it increasingly difficult to afford the commodities on which their hunting and trapping lifeway was predicated. Many of the jobs on which the Natives relied disappeared or were filled by outsiders. There was interference in the relations of production. By 1948, Natives in the Fort Chipewyan region no longer controlled the means of production or even their own societies.

These developments are considered in three chapters. Chapter 4 discusses the significant business and government intrusions for the Fort Chipewyan region from 1918 to 1939. It considers their consequences for the fur trade economy and for changes in the local social formation, as well as efforts made by resident Native peoples to resist these attacks on their economies. Chapter 5 documents the events of the 1940s, the decade when the conflicts which Native peoples faced became so difficult to manage that they began to explore in earnest non-trapping economic strategies and a new mode of production. Finally, chapter 6 focuses on the fur trade mode of production during this period, examining local lifestyles, the stresses which people experienced, and strategies for persistence of this traditional life. Figure 2 shows the geographical locations which are mentioned in the discussion. It is a reduced copy of the map of the region located in the map pocket.

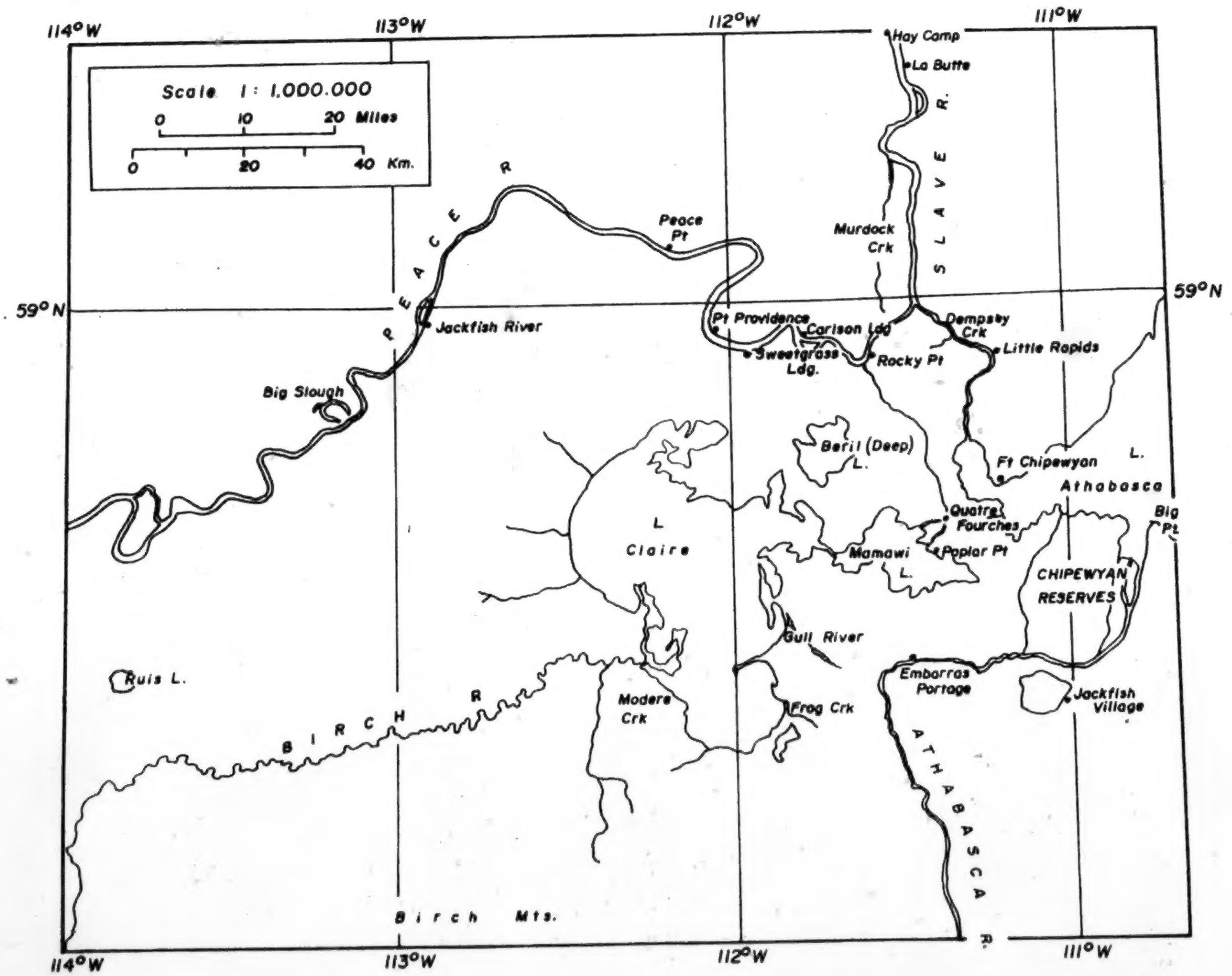
114°W
113°W
112°W
111°W
59° N
59°N
Scale 1: 1.000.000
0 10 20 Miles
0 20 40 Km.
PEACE R
Peace Pt
Jackfish River
Big Slough
Pt Providence
Carlson Ldg
Sweetgrass Ldg.
Rocky Pt
Hay Camp
La Butte
SLAVE R.
Murdock Crk
Dempsey Crk
Little Rapids
Ft Chipewyan
Athabasca L.
Big Pt
Beril (Deep) L.
Quatre Fourches
Poplar Pt
Mamawi L.
L Claire
CHIPEWYAN RESERVES
Gull River
Frog Crk
Embarras Portage
Jackfish Village
ATHABASCA R.
Modere Crk
Ruis L.
BIRCH R
Birch Mts.

Figure 2

The Fort

Chipewyan

Region

CHAPTER 4

REGULATORY AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR IMPACTS IN THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION 1918 TO 1939

The events which affected the Fort Chipewyan region during these two decades were generated by economic and political developments outside the region at both the federal and provincial levels. Southern Canada entered the 1920s with a shaky prairie economy, but as a nation it was newly industrialized and part of a world economy which required its resources. Canada and Alberta progressed through the 1920s and then struggled through the "Great Depression" of the 1930s. In the Fort Chipewyan region, however, the 1920s were crisis years for Native inhabitants, whereas the local situation improved somewhat in the 1930s. This chapter shows the interweaving of these events.

The 1920s began with a post-war depression in the west. New sources of employment and income were badly needed, especially for farmers and homesteaders (Thompson 1978; cf. Kitto 1930:28). These difficulties were compounded by increased living costs (Brown and Cook 1976:309,323) and by the drop in real wages that had occurred from 1900-1915, due to earlier high levels of immigration, which the government had encouraged as part of its western development strategy, and the consequent abundance of labor (cf. Johnson 1972:169). The economy picked up with capital investment into facilities rather than into wages. Real wages rose slowly, in 1925 finally returning to 1900 levels (Johnson 1972:167, 169-170). This expansion of infrastructure continued developments which had been interrupted by the war and represented a period of expansion of

Canadian mercantilism. These merchants were no longer acting independently, however, but had become the agents of industrial capital. They had two strategies to maintain profit levels: they could encourage increased production, and they could reduce their costs.

During the 1920s in the Fort Chipewyan region they were very successful in increasing fur production by supporting an invasion of the region by a large number of outside trappers, especially non-Native or "White," but also Métis. These individuals and their trapping activities represented an extension of the division of labor and a new sector of the local social formation. They trapped and hunted intensively, depleting the fur-bearing and game animal populations. The Fort Chipewyan Natives, particularly those living in the bush communities, found their livelihoods threatened. Indians requested that hunting preserves be established in order to protect some of the remaining fur and game resources. The federal and provincial governments responded instead by creating Wood Buffalo Park (WBP) and by increasing their respective regulatory controls over these resources.

These developments slowed with the coming of the Depression, which had a different impact in the north than it had in southern Canada. Johnson notes "...the huge increase in purchasing power enjoyed by those who managed to remain employed during the depression..." as prices of commodities dropped (Leo Johnson 1972:171). Northern trappers produced both food for their own subsistence needs and furs for exchange. As long as the animal populations were high, they could live comfortably, because of the stable ratio between fur and trade good prices which persisted "...for over thirty years, through the two world wars and the Great Depression" (Asch 1977:52). Natives who had access to the resources of Wood Buffalo Park managed better than did those outside the park, who faced competition for fur and game resources. During the latter part of this decade the federal government established the Chipewyan reserve in the Athabasca delta. The merchants who supplied both the trappers and prospectors modernized their operations in order to reduce labor costs. Many jobs which had been filled by local Métis were eliminated, and still other Métis were replaced by outsiders, usually Whites. These Métis were forced to rely more heavily on bush resources, which were already heavily exploited by increased trapping. These two decades, in other words, were ones in which the traditional fur trade economy faced competition to its detriment.

THE 1920s: CAPITALIST VENTURES INTENSIFY IN THE NORTH

Southern Canadian interest in the "unexploited" north as a source of profits increased after World War I. Kitto, writing about the Peace River country of the 1920s, pointed out that the federal government and the provincial governments of Alberta and B.C. continued to

> ...offer all reasonable inducements and assistance to encourage the development of the Peace River country. Progressive steps have been taken to open it up by establishing lines of communication and transportation on land and river, and by building roads and bridges. Telegraph, telephone, and mail services keep it in touch with the older parts of the country. Law and order are rigidly enforced and maintained, and life and property efficiently protected [1930:108].

Alberta persisted in its efforts to gain the control over public lands and resources which had been denied it in 1905. Alberta public indebtedness, stemming from its pre-war development ventures, combined with the post-war depression of the prairie economy and the evident economic opportunities, led to Alberta "clamouring" for this legislative change (Lothian 1977:5; cf. Richards and Pratt 1979:19; Elton 1979:110). The

Department of the Interior controlled Alberta lands until 1930.

Immediately following World War I, the federal government made lands available in the Peace River farming country for returned soldiers (Kitto 1930:28; Lothian 1977:5) through the Soldiers' Land Settlement Scheme (Brown and Cook 1976:322). This agrarian venture was similar to Canada's 19th century strategy for opening new regions; Kitto called the Peace River country "...the last great agricultural frontier of the Western Canadian plains" (1930:5). However, it suffered from the general western depression after the war, and new farmers needed other sources of income. One of these would be trapping in the lower Peace River area, part of the Fort Chipewyan region.

Agricultural settlement was followed by the excitement over oil and mineral discoveries in the north, the characteristic 20th century form of economic development or growth. There were also profits which could be made through intensive fur trapping and through trading with both trapper and prospector. The government reacted to these economic endeavors by creating institutional frameworks for regulating them. These developments are outlined in this section. Their impact on the peoples of the Fort Chipewyan region are detailed in the sections following.

The first major western oil discovery was at Norman Wells. Prospecting had taken place before the war, with the well brought in during August 1920 (Finnie 1942:118-9; Phillips 1967:147; Rea 1968:154; Fumoleau 1975:152-3; McConnell 1965:82). The discovery of oil sparked a minor stampede down the Mackenzie River (Finnie 1942:64; Rea 1968:156; Fumoleau 1975:154-6). Until then, the Northwest Territories (NWT) had been governed by the fur traders and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)[1] although there had been provision since 1905 for a territorial council (which had never been created). The rush required both a mining recorder in the NWT and increased "coordination and centralization" in governing the NWT (Finnie 1942:64; cf. also Fumoleau 1975:155-7; Rea 1968:34-35).

The federal government responded to these changes by sending out a treaty party to obtain land cessions from the northern Indians (Treaty 11), by establishing a NWT council, and by instituting the Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch (NWT&Y) of the Department of the Interior (Finnie 1942:64; Mitchell 1976:4), an administrative development which would be very important for people in the Fort Chipewyan region. The Department of the Interior had been created in 1873 "...to superintend the opening and settlement of the Canadian West" (Lothian 1977:10). In 1921 this special branch was designated for the opening and settlement of the Canadian north. Its first Director was O. S. Finnie, who

> ...recruited a staff of trained administrators, explorers, and scientists, and initiated a long-range program. The immediate goal was the clarification of existing laws, the making and enforcing of appropriate regulations, the gathering of new information, and the planning and carrying out of various projects, all of which were designed to put the Territories on a sounder economic footing with sympathetic regard for the welfare of the inhabitants [Finnie 1942:64; Richard Finnie is O. S. Finnie's son and cannot be considered a disinterested reporter].

In the ten years following Finnie's appointment,

> Great progress was made....[It was]...a period that ushered in a great era. The eyes of prospectors and mining engineers were now turning toward the Territories. ... Civilization's northward advance was under way...[Finnie 1942:64, 65].

The NWT and Yukon Branch was given the jurisdiction over Wood Buffalo Park, which would be created during this decade and which will be the focus of considerable discussion in this chapter.

The Norman Wells rush also indicated the need for modern transport facilities. This strike brought the first airplanes into the north. Aircraft revolutionized mineral exploration, resulting in increased prospecting and mining activity, especially in the 1930s. There was regular air service between Fort Chipewyan and Fort McMurray in 1929, and planes were common in the north by the early 1930s (Finnie 1942: 92-99, 102, 119; MacGregor 1974:158, 164-5; Rea 1968:213; Phillips 1967: 147; Mathewson 1974:69; Wuetherick 1973:A133). The river transport system flourished, and by 1920 there were proposals for railways to connect Fort Fitzgerald to Fort Smith and points further north (memo from J. B. Harkin ?, Canadian National Parks, to Mr. Cory, 21 March 1921, PAC RG 85 v. 578 file 430; memo from O. S. Finnie, Acting Secretary, NWT, to Mr. Cory, 13 April 1921, PAC RG 85 v. 578 file 430). In Alberta, the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway,

> ...encouraged by the prospect of carrying passengers and machinery destined for the new Imperial Oil Limited's Norman Wells oil fields, began upgrading its road-bed and improving its service to McMurray [MacGregor 1974:159].

The railway was brought to the present end of steel at Waterways in 1926 (Finnie 1942:90; MacGregor 1974:158).

A simultaneous encouragement for the improvement of railway and especially of river transport was the high prices paid for furs after World War I, peaking in 1919-1920 but continuing high until the Depression (Fumoleau 1975:236; McConnell 1965:89). The fur trade accounted for most of the freight shipped by river until 1930, when mining became more important for transport. In 1921, the HBC launched a new steamboat, the Athabasca River, to run between the railway and Fort Fitzgerald (MacGregor 1974:162-3), and "about the same time, diesel engines [were] installed on several of the new boats..." (ibid.:164). In the winter, the riverboats were supplemented by a horse-drawn transport on the ice from Fort

McMurray to Forts Chipewyan and Smith, begun by Mickey Ryan in 1922. He invested some of his profits from this venture into building the road between Fort Fitzgerald and Fort Smith, as well as the portage around the Slave River Rapids, for which he is better known (Mackinnon 1980:28; MacGregor 1974:163).

River transport was operated by trading companies, creating integrated mercantile operations. The HBC faced stiff competition during the 1920s from Jim Cornwall's Northern Transportation Company and from Lamson and Hubbard, a Brooklyn, New York Company which entered the fur trade with both ships and its own trappers in 1919 (memo from Asst. Controller to O. S. Finnie, Sec. NWT&Y Branch, 18 April 1921, PAC RG 85 v. 578 file 419-31; McConnell 1965:89; letter from A. Brabant, Dist. Manager, HBC Fort McMurray, to J. B. Harkin, Commissioner, Dominion Parks Branch, 17 Jan. 1919, PAC RG 10 v. 4084 file 496,658). It is not clear whether these company trappers entered the Fort Chipewyan region or worked only in the Arctic.

THE 1920s: THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION

The immediate impact in the Fort Chipewyan region of the combined factors of improved transportation, a depressed prairie economy, and high fur prices was that the region was invaded by scores of outside trappers. Later in the decade, commercial fishermen came to fish in the "virgin" waters of Lake Athabasca. With the exception of the Métis trappers from Lac La Biche, the newcomers were transient non-Native men who undertook trapping and fishing as commercial enterprises for cash income and not as a way of life. Most of the income left the region, causing a somewhat different form of underdevelopment than had previously existed. It involved the productive process itself, not just exchange rates. Commercial fishing created a new commodity which was shipped south; it would have a long-term impact on fish stocks of Lake Athabasca and the surrounding lakes and streams. Commercial trapping intensified the production of furs and thereby depleted the number of fur bearers and game animals that were the Natives' resource base.

The Indians of the Fort Chipewyan region responded to these changing circumstances by requesting that hunting and trapping preserves (analogous to the Indian reserves promised in Treaty 8) be increased and by intensifying their own production of fur. The provincial government responded by imposing game regulations which affected all hunters, trappers, and fishermen alike. But, the federal government's major response was the creation of Wood Buffalo Park. The reaction of the state to the increased exploitation which accompanied the increasing mercantilist activity was to regulate the use of the land and its resources, regulation which removed control from its traditional Native users.

OUTSIDE TRAPPERS

There were two origins of outside trappers. The first group was Métis trappers from the Lac La Biche region of Alberta; the second was non-Native or White trappers, especially European immigrants who had homesteaded on the Alberta prairies and in the Peace River country. They had different modes of production and became part of the Fort Chipewyan social configuration in different ways.

Lac La Biche Métis Move North

The Lac La Biche area was an early center of Métis settlement in Alberta. This settlement was firmly established by 1871 (Stanley 1961: 177). Among the founding families were Ladouceurs and Bourques (Douard 1980:4), some of whom later moved to the Fort Chipewyan region. Its people were implicated in the Northwest "Rebellion" of 1885, and at least some Métis who fought in this conflict did live at Lac La Biche or later moved (fled?) there after the Métis defeat (Stanley 1961:344-5; field journal 1977 III:84). The creation of the short-lived Oblate organized colony of Saint-Paul-des-Métis consolidated the area as a focus of Métis settlement and raised Métis expectations (Stanley 1978:75-107). The demise of this colony in 1909 and the denial of land to some Métis motivated at least some families to move to areas which were less populated and less controlled by non-Métis; Stanley wrote that

> ...several Métis families, feeling that they had been victimized by the white man's intolerance,...packed up their miserable belongings and set off for the wild lands in the vicinity of Lesser Slave Lake [1978:105].

The Métis at Lac La Biche made a living by a combination of hunting, trapping, fishing, farming, and freighting, not unlike that of the Fort Chipewyan Indians and Métis. One major source of employment was river transport. When the Methye portage route was abandoned in the mid 1880s in favor of the route through Edmonton and Athabasca Landing, the Métis in the Lac La Biche area became the core of the "Athabasca Scow Brigade," the men who ran the HBC boats from Athabasca Landing down the Grand Rapids to Fort McMurray, a 250 mile run (MacGregor 1974:97-98,148,179). While MacGregor calls the scow brigade "...the most romantic river service of all..." (ibid.:98), it involved the hard and often dangerous work of walking approximately 100 miles to Athabasca

Landing in the spring, running the rapids, tracking some boats back upriver or walking back to Athabasca Landing, and then returning home in the fall, for the sum of $45 (MacGregor 1974:149). By 1908, the boatmen earned $20 to $40 per month, plus board and moccasins (Cameron 1910:76). Cree Indians worked in the crews as well.

As northern transport systems modernized, the need for Métis workers decreased, especially when the railway bypassed Athabasca Landing and the Grand Rapids by providing rail service from Edmonton to Waterways. This development must have created serious economic difficulties for the scowmen by eliminating their major non-trapping source of cash income at a time when there were few other economic opportunities.

The response of many Métis to this situation was to move farther north, down the Athabasca River to Lake Athabasca and the Slave River. They were attracted by the good fur prices and the good muskrat trapping of the Athabasca delta, and possibly by the larger variety of goods in the stores at Fort Chipewyan compared with Lac La Biche (field journal 1977 II:51; V:83-84). It has also been suggested that Fort Chipewyan traders, especially Colin Fraser, may have encouraged Lac La Biche Métis to relocate to Lake Athabasca to increase local fur production (cf. Schlader 1978). Many Métis were already familiar with the Fort Chipewyan region because of their work on the boats.

Some families moved down river gradually, with some men (with families?) going initially only for spring trapping (field journal 1977 V:25-26). Other families apparently moved directly to new settlements in the region, bringing with them all their belongings, including cattle. They established extended family settlements. The Cardinals and Ladouceurs moved to Jackfish (Richardson) Lake and Big Point, located where the main channel of the Athabasca River enters Lake Athabasca, in 1919-1921 (field journal 1977 III:30; AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.). Bourques and Desjarlais' moved down the Slave River in the early 1920s to the Caribou Island area, and other families, including Augers and Powders, moved to Camsell Portage, on the Saskatchewan side of Lake Athabasca, where they could trap fine furs such as marten and fox (field journal 1977 V:83-84; cf. fig. 2).

Both Jackfish Lake and Big Point had been occupied by Chipewyan Indians when the Métis moved there: Jackfish Lake was traditionally the home of Marcels, Mercredis, and Laviolettes, and at Big Point there were the Adam and Denepu families. An existing affinal link between Hyacynthe Elie Cardinal of Lac La Biche and Sophie Boucher, whose ancestry was French-Métis and Cree through her father and Chipewyan through her mother (married ca. 1912 in Lac La Biche), may have facilitated Métis entry into the Chipewyan social community, at least for the Cardinal and Ladouceur families. Other Métis had affinal kin in the region: the Decoine family relocated from Wabasca after their mother, Isabelle Nawis, was widowed and remarried in 1903 to Thomas Gibot, a Fort Chipewyan Cree signatory to Treaty 8. The family was in Fort Chipewyan by 1905, when the church records noted a baptismal date for their first son. Decoines were intermarried with Powders, who moved to the Fort Chipewyan region in the 1920s. These families moved into the area which became Wood Buffalo Park. Another family, Castor, entered the region in the 1930s when Solomon Castor from Lac La Biche moved to Fort Chipewyan and married Clementine Wakwan, a Cree Indian (AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.).

These Métis were seen by the resident Chipewyan as a threat. One informant stated that Jonas Laviolette, the Chipewyan chief, "raised hell" with the Indian Agent, because he wanted the Lac La Biche people kicked out of Jackfish Lake and Big Point (field journal 1977 II:75; cf. Parker 1978). However, the Métis used a fur trade mode of production similar to that of Fort Chipewyan Natives. Métis were not profit oriented as were the Whites; they simply wanted to reproduce their previous social situations. They moved north as families to become permanent residents, and eventually they were accepted by the local Indians, especially when they began to marry into the local Indian bands (by 1919), establishing the alliances which allowed them to become attached to the Native social communities. They maintained some distinctiveness, however, by retaining a distinct dialect of Cree and a sense of their Métis ancestry (field journals; cf. Parker 1979).

Non-Native or White Trappers

The non-Native trappers presented a completely different situation. The HBC manager at Fort McMurray, A. Brabant, predicted in 1919 that their coming would ruin the fur trade:

> These boats [owned by "Lampson and Hibbert"] will no doubt take in a number of American trappers, as it is known that for the large extent of territory, which they expect to trade over, there are not a sufficient number of Eskimo and Indians to furnish business to the extent that it would be necessary to make the venture profitable. Now if trappers are taken in, it will mean the speedy decimation of fur bearing animals in that part of the country, as the American trapper's method is the indiscriminate use of poison, not having any interest in the future of the country, it makes little difference to him so long as he can make a stake and get out. Musk ox, Caribou, and particularly White Fox, will be killed out regardless of the game laws [letter from A. Brabant, District Manager, HBC, to J. B. Harkin, Commissioner, District Parks Branch, 17 Jan. 1919, PAC RG 10 v. 4084 file 496,658].

He based his prediction on the use of poison by non-Indian trappers in northern Alberta, probably before World War I and outside the Fort

Chipewyan region:

> ...the use of poison by American trappers had cleaned out the Peace River and Athabasca districts, and wile [sic] more severe laws were enacted since, only one or two convictions were secured, and its use will be continued unless the penalty is increased, and that on conviction the trapper to lose his license for all time [ibid.].

After World War I, outside trappers moved north because of improved transportation, high fur prices, and the depressed prairie economy. F. H. Kitto described the first wave of White trappers in 1920:

> The high price of furs prevailing during the past winter [1919-1920] when [musk]rats ran from $1.50 to $3.50 cash has given a great stimulus to the spring rat hunt. Many young men came into the country simply for this hunt. As a rule they are green and inexperienced in hunting or woodcraft. ...
>
> In their quest for sudden wealth they killed everything in sight. Muskrat houses were broken open, slashed to pieces and not covered up again [resulting in any rats not taken freezing to death].
>
> The young white trappers, unskilled and unaccustomed to wood life, suffer all the hardships and privations consequent upon such ignorance. They live in filth and misery, make a frantic effort to make the best of their venture by securing every pelt possible regardless of consequences and then curse the country [F. H. Kitto, report, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A].

Kitto reported that about 100,000 muskrats were trapped that winter in the Fort Chipewyan region, valued at approximately $300,000 (ibid.). In 1923, two non-Native trappers were reported "...to have taken 1,800 muskrats, and to have trapped the rats in the Main Slough virtually to extermination in doing so" (Fuller 1951a:35).

While most outsiders entered the region only to trap, some homesteaders considered moving into the bison range, where they could combine trapping and farming. Kitto was told "...that a couple of returned soldiers were contemplating going to Peace Point with some cattle and simply squatting" (F. H. Kitto, report, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A).

Winter fur trapping was a partial solution to the economic problems faced by farmers and homesteaders: trapping supported the individual over the winter and produced an income that could help support both his family, who remained in the south, and the summer farming operation. Kitto estimated that serious trappers could make as much as $4,500 in a few months with little expense other than their own labor, and many made from $1,000 to $2,500 profit in less than six months (F. H. Kitto, preliminary notes, Fort Smith, 26 June 1920, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A). Such successes encouraged other southerners to head north to trap in the Fort Chipewyan region.

Robert Jarvenpa's description of White trappers in northern Saskatchewan in the 1930s can be applied in the 1920s in northeastern Alberta. The boreal forest was a "forest frontier" which

> ...became a convenient refuge for transient white males from the unsettled portions of southern Canada and the adjacent United States. These men possessed the social attributes which accommodated a transitory, solitary lifestyle. Generally, they appear to have been young (late teens to late 30's), unmarried individuals with diminished or severed family ties, but others represented temporary emigres from large farming or working class families. ... Despite the rural socio-economic background and associated outdoor work experiences of many prospective trappers, fledgling trappers...often arrived in the north ill-prepared for a livelihood in the bush and completely unacquainted with the Indians whose habitual territories they were invading [1977:165].

Graham reported in 1922 that many of the White trappers were "...foreigners with no respect for the law" (1923:11), indicating the participation of eastern European immigrants living in the west.

The underlying reason for the serious difficulties in the Fort Chipewyan region was that the mode of production of the White trappers was very different from that of the Indians and Métis, notwithstanding that both groups trapped in the same areas, for the same animals, and with essentially the same technology. Fumoleau recognized this difference when he talked about their "...different attitudes and goals," which represented "incompatible interests" (1975:239). Godelier has illustrated this difference between Native and White modes of production. The Natives, characterized by the fur trade mode of production, belonged to

> ...a society in which the ultimate finality is in reproducing itself as such, and not in accumulating property and material profits. In this society, kin relations and alliances constitute the general framework of the individual's existence and his protection from both the rigors or nature and the destruction and pressures caused by whites [Godelier 1974:47; trans. by Jack Ives].

White trappers, on the other hand, belonged

> ...to an economic system oriented completely toward monetary profit, and where traditional family solidarity has disappeared to accommodate the individual isolated by society in society itself. That individual, having no choice, accepts this as inevitable [ibid.].

These distinctions were not solely academic, but quite visible to local observers. H. J. Bury compared the Indian and White modes of trapping in a 1926 memo which supports Godelier's conclusion:

> A comparison between the Indian mode of trapping and that followed by the average white trapper proves beyond all doubt that the Indian is a game conservationist. The Indians trap on the same grounds each year, get their fur when it is prime, refrain from total extermination of the fur bearing animals and exercise as a rule careful restrictions with regard to the use of fire in the bush.
>
> The average white trapper is not concerned with the question of continuous yearly trapping in one district. Having picked out a promising territory his main object is to clean it out during one season and move to new grounds the following year. With this in mind he resorts to methods which result in the extermination of all fur bearers in his territory. He is accused, (on good authority) of dynamiting beaver houses and dams, and the trapping of unprime fur by catching animals with traps equipped with cloth wrapped jaws so as to keep them alive in captivity until the arrival of cold weather, and the systematic slaughter of all the fur bearers in his district [H. J. Bury, Supervisor Indian Timber Lands, to Dep. Supt.-Gen., 7 July 1926, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1].

The HBC was similarly concerned, because it had a long term interest in the fur trade and was not interested in short term profits only.[2] Fumoleau cites a passage from an article written by Ralph Parsons, the HBC Fur Trade Commissioner:

> "The great majority [of White trappers] take up trapping in the same way as they would take up any other occupation - to obtain the largest possible return in the shortest possible time....
>
> "The Indian may be lazy, improvident and shiftless, but, insofar as the conservation of the wild life is concerned, these failings may be almost regarded as virtues. ...[W]hereas the 'White' trappers will go into a territory and not be satisfied until he has cleaned it out, the Indian will only take what he requires to see him through from day to day. He has no incentive to make large hunts. He traps to fill his immediate needs only. It is only when the Indian comes up against the intensive competition of the 'White' trapper that he goes to excess in trapping and in killing out wild life. With few exceptions, it will be found that where Indians have been left alone, there is no undue scarcity of animal life in their vicinity. ...
>
> "The great difference between the 'White' and the Indian trapper is that the White trapper goes into the country with the fixed idea of doing nothing else but trapping and of getting every possible skin he can. The Indian, on the other hand, is settled permanently in the country and all he does is to make a bare living hunting for food and trapping to get the wherewithal to pay for his other few necessities.
>
> "The majority of the White trappers are itinerants moving from one place to another and a great number of them are foreigners whose object is to take as much as possible out of the country and to put as little as possible back. The Indian, on the other hand, puts all he makes back into the trade of the locality in which he lives" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:239-240].

Finnie compared the exploitative patterns of White trappers with those of miners:

> ...white trappers tended to "mine" an area and move on. They would strive to make as much money as possible in a short period, maintaining long trap lines and devoting all their energies to the accumulating of fur. Some of them would wipe out the game and all the breeding stock of fur-bearers wherever they operated. The natives could not compete, and the high-pressure methods of their white rivals threatened their livelihoods [1942:72].

While the fur trade mode of production was characterized by underproduction, the White trappers' mode of production was fully capitalist, intensive production and resulted in underdevelopment as their profits left the locality and because they depleted the animal populations they exploited. To the White trappers, trapping was simply one more job, and the goal of this and any work was to maximize cash income. One example was Chick Ferguson, who planned to trap in the north long enough to make a stake to support him and his wife back in the south (Fumoleau 1975:241). Another was a Saskatchewan trapper named "Black Henry," whose

> ...philosophy was that a man did not come this far north for the good of his health and he must make the most of the opportunities as they were discovered, to take all the fur animals he could in one season and then move out [Karras 1975:150].

Natives of Fort Resolution recalled the impact of the White trappers:

> "White trappers spoiled the country. Had too many traps, 600, 500, like that. Us natives, well, my brother had 35 and that the most any had, most had 18, 19, 20, like that.
>
> "Every slough, just off the Slave River had a white trapper. They would come in and just clean out the slough of muskrats. They would leave nothing for seed. They would kill every beaver in every lodge they found. Then they would get the hell out of the country. The Indians weren't like that; they weren't getting rich, they were living off the land and knew that they had to be a little bit careful anyway" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:240].

Fumoleau points out that White trappers did not trap in areas not used by Indians. Instead, they entered the traditional Indian hunting and trapping grounds, the best resource areas, and so they were in direct competition for game and fur bearers with the Indians.

Indian Protests and Strategies

The Indians of the Fort Chipewyan region bitterly resented the outside intruders. Fumoleau says that

> The railway from Edmonton to Fort McMurray was the target for resentment in Fort Chipewyan in 1922. It brought more white trappers into the country who were trespassing on Indian hunting and trapping grounds [1975:251].

People saw their livelihood threatened, and they responded with considerable antagonism, especially in the first few years. Louise Rourke, who described Fort Chipewyan in 1924-26, wrote,

> Much valuable timber and fur is lost each year through the action of the Indians, who, because of their jealousy of the white trapper who invades what the Indians consider to be their own territory, do all in their power to discourage or drive the "pale-face" out of the bush by setting large tracts of the country-side on fire. I have seen a stretch of country flaming for weeks without a break... [though she was not sure] that the Indians were guilty of this treachery. It was always difficult to trace the transgressors, though our Police believed the Chipewyans to be the chief offenders in thus ruining the country-side. The Indians who took umbrage at the white man's presence if he engaged in trapping, would welcome him as a Missionary, trader or doctor, but they feel that the traplines should be all their own, and often prefer to ruin the trapping ground completely rather than share it [n.d.:283-4; cf. Bill Russell 1981:13].

Bury advised the government in 1926 that

> In certain portions of northern Alberta this state of affairs has created a condition that is leading to retaliatory measures to the extent that evidence has been furnished the Department of the Interior showing that Indians have resorted to burning down the cabins of white trappers...[memo from H. J. Bury, Supervisor Indian Timber Lands, to Dep. Supt.-Gen., 7 July 1926, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1].

The Indians were aware of the control exercised by the RCMP and that continued retaliation by them would eventually result in being charged, fined, and jailed for such actions. There were also caught in a contradiction relating to the ownership and control of theland itself. On the one hand, they did not own the land or its resources, although there were areas of traditional land use. On the other hand, there were certain ways in which they used the land, including underproduction and sharing, which were part of the fur trade mode of production and which were violated by the White newcomers. Rather than continue protesting violently, they adopted another strategy: they increased their own production of fur, which kept the fur from the White trappers. Kitto reported in 1920 that when the White trappers began killing all the animals they could find and began slashing open muskrat houses, so did the Indians (report, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A; see also material on WBP for the 1930s, below). This hostile strategy caused Constable Phillips of the Alberta Provincial Police to comment that the Indians "...have no more sense than to eliminate the game that keeps them alive" (ibid.). Such a course of action only increased the severity of the problems faced by the Indians, who may have been competing with 1,000 additional people in the region, counting both the White trappers and the new Métis families (an estimate by Father Jaslier, a resident priest, in 1923, cited in Fumoleau 1975:252). There must have been considerable destruction of game habitats and populations.

A better strategy by the Indians was to request protection from this competition. The Chipewyan and Cree bands asked, through Indian Agent Gerald Card, that a 4,000 square mile hunting and trapping preserve be created (Bill Russell 1981:10). The Indians were not asking for their own reserves at this time. Russell notes that the Department of Indian Affairs had broached this subject to the bands in 1916, but no action had been taken (ibid.). The bands were probably afraid that they would be restricted to reserves, as the Indians in the south had been. Card's explanation of the request is cited in Fumoleau (1975:251-2):

> "All were very indignant at the way White trappers were crowding them out of their hunting and trapping grounds. They asked that application should be made to the government for the land about Lake Claire and Maima [Mamawi] should be set aside as a reserve. That they had always made their living in this district, and claimed they had a prior right to the district....

> "There has been trouble for several years among both the Cree and Chipewyan Bands, [in] Fort Chipewyan, about the game restrictions imposed by the provincial government, and by the ever-increasing number of White trappers who have come into the country. In one case a white trapper named Bjarson is claimed to have threatened a number of Indians, and practically, for the time being, driven a number of families from their trapping and hunting grounds and from their homes. Owing to the number of unemployed who come into the country the situation has become acute, and unless action is taken the fur supply will soon be wiped out and the Indians will be direct charges on the government, as other than hunting and trapping there is no work for them. To protect their interests, as guaranteed by treaty, both bands asked for a reserve, not for farming, as they had no wish to farm, nor is the land suited for that purpose, but for hunting and trapping. To make the matter definite I requested both bands to apply for a reservation, naming the area selected. This application has been received, and is herewith attached. The area is much larger than that which they are entitled by treaty, but the bulk of the land is water and marsh ground useless for any other purpose than that for which they wish it to be set apart...."

These requests continued to be made regularly and with increasing urgency through the 1920s (cf. Bill Russell 1981:11-15; Fumoleau 1975: 252-4). By 1927, the Chipewyan band was asking that both reserves and a preserve be created (Bill Russell 1981:14). They were supported by northern politician Jim Cornwall and by Bishop Breynat, on the grounds that if the status quo were unaltered, the Indians would be rendered destitute and a charge upon the Crown (Fumoleau 1975:237-8).

The federal government was sympathetic to the bands, although it resisted the idea of a large preserve for two reasons: first, Treaty 8 provided for reserves amounting only to 70 square miles (cf. Bill Russell 1981:11). Secondly, although the federal government still enjoyed the legal control of Alberta lands, it was unwilling to pressure the provincial government to agree to such a preserve. The Department of Indian Affairs did approach the provincial government about how non-Indian hunting and trapping might best be regulated to protect Indian interests (Bill Russell 1981:11). The province's response was that if Indians were granted exclusive hunting and trapping districts, they would have to forfeit their rights under Treaty 8 to hunt and trap elsewhere in the province (ibid.:13). The provincial government viewed the White trappers as "desirable" (Fumoleau 1975:237), and Indians were neither voters nor a provincial responsibility. The province's first responsibility was to those individuals it defined as its citizens. Its response to this northern situation was not to prohibit White hunting and trapping, but rather to increase the restrictions on the exploitation of all fur bearers and game.

A report on the "Condition of Hunting Indians in Remote Districts," which may have been prepared for a January, 1929, conference of federal and provincial game officials, indicates the attitudes which characterized officials at both federal and provincial levels:

> These white trappers are more astute and energetic than the aborigines, who cannot withstand keen competition to which they are utterly unaccustomed. Furthermore, it is the tendency of the whites to trap out an area until the game is completely exhausted.
>
> In addition to this competition by white trappers, there must be taken into consideration the stringent game restrictions that have been imposed in recent years. These, while undoubtedly necessary for conservation, bear heavily upon the Indian hunters. The same comment applies to the setting aside of National Parks and Game Sanctuaries which, although praiseworthy inovations [sic] necessary in the public interest, nevertheless, aggravate the difficulties of the Indians [PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1].

That is, Indians would inevitably suffer in the interests of the development of the north, which these White trappers were helping to open and from which they were producing income (cf. Bill Russell 1981:11). While in 1919 Indians in the Treaty 8 area were not bound by the provincial game laws because of government recognition of their dependence on game ("public Notice" from Supt. Gen. of Indian Affairs, 10 March 1919, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1), by 1924 this exemption was no longer effective in Saskatchewan (cf. Fumoleau 1975:251) and possibly Alberta. Generally, status Indians in both the provinces and in the NWT were allowed to hunt for food despite the various game acts, but they were bound by these same acts in trapping furs for trade (cf. Mathewson 1974:65).

THE CREATION OF WOOD BUFFALO PARK

The federal government viewed the influx of outside trappers as a new and serious threat to the wood bison of the Fort Smith-Fort Chipewyan regions. Also, government officials still worried that Indians were hunting bison illegally, despite the fact that bison were apparently increasing in number in the early 1920s. In 1921, two bison kills were investigated, implicating a White man who escaped to the U.S. and a Chipewyan "half-breed," who was tried and convicted at Fort Fitzgerald and fined $300 and costs (Graham 1923:11). Graham claimed that

> Increased protection has become necessary from a variety of causes. Formerly only Indians molested the buffalo. Of late years the Treaty Indians in and around Fort Smith have become more amenable and have not harassed the animals to any extent. Half-breeds and Indians from other districts, however, are still a menace, as also are some of the white trappers...[1923:11].

Not all residents of the area were as sanguine as Graham about Indian bison hunting: in 1920 Kitto reported that Thomas Woodman, then a trader at Fort Vermilion, "Thinks if Indians were left in vicinity of buffalo the buffalo would simply disappear" (F. H. Kitto, report, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A). Graham had four areas of concern: first, he worried that the general increase in hunting activity, with other large game species increasingly fewer in number, would lead to poaching of bison. A second problem was the nature of the outside trappers, whom he described as

> ...inexperienced outsiders looking for easy money by trapping muskrats. Apart from ruthless trapping, shooting, and even poisoning of fur-bearers in the reserve, the kind of trappers referred to would soon drive away the buffalo...

from their winter ranges. Thirdly, there had been bad forest fires which "...have a disastrous effect on the range and seriously deplete the grazing areas." Lastly, he worried about wolf predation (1923:11-12).

The federal government dealt with this situation by taking steps to create the bison park which had been proposed before the war. Its object was to protect the bison, with a secondary goal of protecting the Indian inhabitants of the bison range from the competition with outside trappers. The first goal was not in question, although the second one was. Government correspondence suggested that the Indians deserved some consideration in the decision to create a park, because

> ...these Indians were practically debarred from occupation of a large area of land from which time immemorial has been the scene of their hunting and trapping [letter from J. D. McLean, Dep. Supt.-Gen., to J. B. Harkin, Commissioner, 22 July 1920, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A].

Inspector Anderson at Fort Fitzgerald took an opposite point of view. He told Kitto that he would like to see a big game preserve protecting all animals, not just bison:

> He is very much opposed to allowing any Indians, half-breeds or Indian reserves to be tolerated near such reserve. Says it would defeat the objects aimed at immediately. Says there are only a few Indians in this part of the country and they do not need this land. They will not farm or ranch. Their needs could be satisfied by a small reserve at the mouth of Salt River for fishing purposes. Describes the Indians as exceedingly lazy, thriftless, dirty, untruthful and immoral. Some of them steal but not the majority but the half-breeds are inborn thieves. Half-breeds and Indians are all liars [F. H. Kitto, report, PAC RG 10 v. 4085 file 496,658 1A].

His views about the Indians and Métis and their requirements were colored by what he considered to be their lack of cooperation and by what they considered to be his imposition of an alien regulatory system.

Wood Buffalo Park was created in 1922. Kitto took the credit for this decision, claiming that

> "As a result of my recommendations, the Government decided to set aside a large tract of country including the whole of the range as a bison reserve. Further exploration was decided on to determine the extent of the boundaries" [cited in Lothian 1976:62].

These explorations were conducted by F. V. Seibert and Maxwell Graham in the summer of 1922, and the park was officially established on December 18, 1922, by Order in Council P.C. 2498. Although the Order in Council was issued under the authority of the Dominion Forest Reserves and Park Act, it specified that this new northern park would not be administered by the Dominion Parks Branch, but by the Northwest Territories Branch of the Department of the Interior, presumably because Wood Buffalo Park was designed primarily to protect the bison and not designed for visitors, which was the major concern of the southern national parks. The District Agent for the Mackenzie District of the Northwest Territories Branch became the Park Superintendent (Wood Buffalo National Park [WBNP] Mitchell 1976:4; Lothian 1976:37,62,66). It included that part of the present park lying north of the Peace River (see fig. 3), falling within both Alberta and the NWT. New administrative structures to run the park and regulate its resources were required; their development and impact on the Native and non-Native users are discussed in the following pages.

Park Warden Service

The warden service, which had been called ineffective before the war, was now reorganized and expanded, making it more professional and giving wardens increased authority. There was a chief Park Warden,

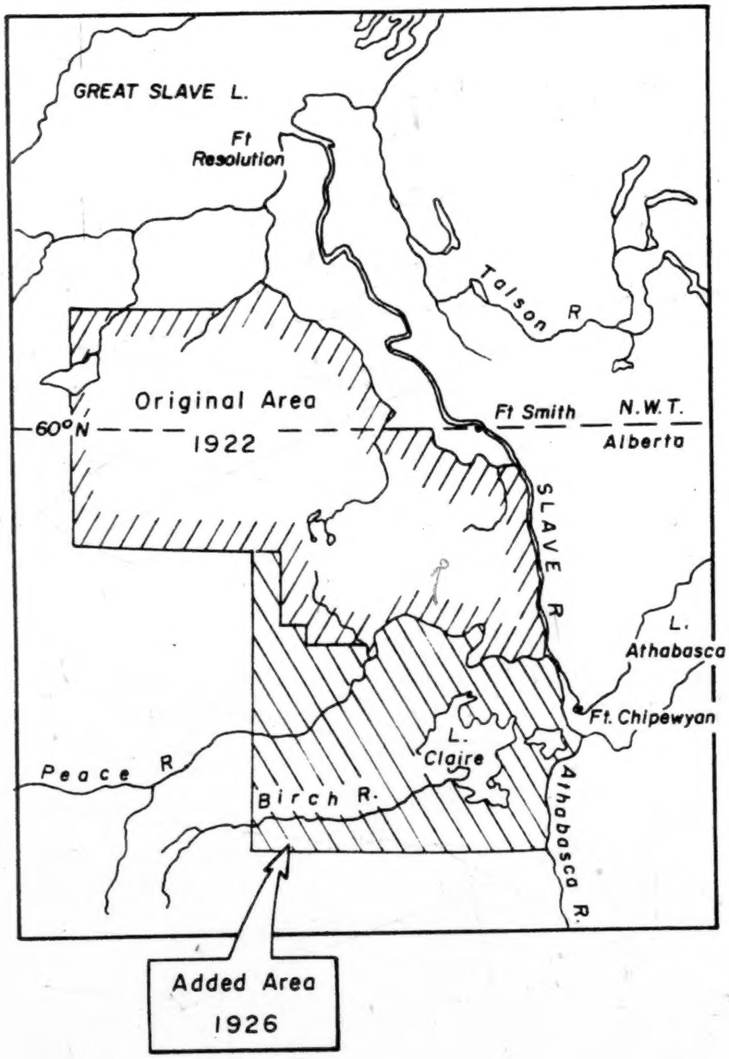
GREAT SLAVE L.
Ft Resolution
Talson R
Original Area
1922
60°N
Ft Smith
N.W.T.
Alberta
SLAVE R
L. Athabasca
Ft. Chipewyan
L. Claire
Peace R
Birch R.
Athabasca R.
Added Area
1926

Figure 3

Wood Buffalo Park

[Adapted from a map prepared by NWT&Yukon Branch, WBNP files] who supervised a staff of five wardens (Lothian in Church 1976:5,8), and in 1922 all the men selected were returned soldiers (Graham 1923:10). Wardens had previously been allowed to hunt and trap to supplement their own pay and as a bonus; Graham recommended that these privileges be denied:

> Now that the salaries have been raised from $50.00 per month plus rations, to $70.00 per month plus rations the same reason for granting this privilege no longer obtains... [Maxwell Graham, "Explanatory Statement regarding Proposed Regulations for the Protection of Game in the Wood-Buffalo Park," 18 Dec. 1922, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

The wardens made tours from cabin to cabin to provide increased protection to the bison by more continuous scrutiny of Native subsistence activities (Graham 1923:10; Raup 1933:17). They also organized "...local protection against forest fires" (Raup 1933:17). This intensified surveillance almost certainly led to a decline in Native burning, which would have conflicted with park fire regulations.

Land Use Regulations

Graham, the park's strongest advocate, was responsible for framing most of its first regulations. They reflect a strong feeling that the park should not be used for commercial enterprises. However, some traditional subsistence uses were to be allowed, as long as they did not harm the park and its bison. This anti-development framework would persist until the end of World War II.

Graham devised regulations for a wide range of activities. Hay-cutting, a traditional activity in the park (field journal 1975), was to be allowed. Graham recommended that the park charge $1.00 per ton, since in Fort Smith "Good hay...fetches...as high as $70.00 per ton..." (memo from Maxwell Graham, Dept. of the Interior, to T. L. Cory, 12 Jan. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Grazing might be permitted for cattle and horses - but not for sheep - subject to restrictions regarding identification of animals, grazing location, and so forth ("Proposed Regulations regarding Grazing Permits in the Wood-Buffalo Park," PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1).

Salt mining was to be allowed for private use only, at a fee of $1.00 per permit (letter, "To His Excellency the Gov. General in Council," n.d., PAC GR 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). However, no other mining or prospecting was to be allowed in the park, contrary to a suggestion of Graham's (ibid.; memo from Maxwell Graham to Mr. Finnie, 16 Feb. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). This provision caused some dissension in the warden service. In March 1926 John A. McDougal, the District Agent and Park Superintendent, wrote the Director that

> Owing to the mining boom it may be difficult to engage men for work in the Park on trails etc. All wardens are complaining about the restrictions imposed on mineral rights [25 March 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Two wardens quit the park service for this reason.

There was conflict about lumbering regulations. In 1923 Graham recommended that "bona fide" householders be allowed to cut wood for personal use, up to 25 cords of dead wood from a five acre lot free of charge. One such permit could be granted every three months, for $0.25 each. Green timber was not to be cut except where it was desirable to thin out dense growths, to construct roads, or to make other improvements (Graham, "Proposed Regulations for the Removal of Timber in the Wood-Buffalo Park," 26 Feb. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). These restrictions must have disturbed the Indians of the area, who would be restricted to certain types of wood and who would be required to obtain permits. The regulations affected their commercial wood-cutting activities for the steamboats, although the need for wood fuel had been reduced by the introduction of diesel engines. These regulations also upset the Alberta and Arctic Transportation Company, which claimed that its permit entitled it to take wood from either side of the Peace or Slave Rivers for its boats, the park rules notwithstanding. The Transportation Company sent a man into the park to live there illegally and to cut wood; he refused to leave when ordered to do so by a warden (letter from John A. McDougal to the Director, 18 Oct. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1).

Hunting and Trapping Regulations

The most important regulations were those relating to hunting, trapping, fishing, and trading in the park. The Dominion Parks Act did not provide for any hunting or trapping in its parks, and Church states flatly that for Wood Buffalo Park, "no hunting or trapping privileges were granted at that time" (1976:5). However, when the park was created, Graham had proposed three special regulations which provided that Treaty Indians would have hunting and trapping privileges "...under restriction and supervision" (no. 23); that forest officers, explorers or surveyors while in government service might hunt "...when in actual need of food" (no. 24); and that "...the provisions of the Migratory Birds Convention Act apply to a specially created Game Preserve and park just as much as they do elsewhere" (no. 25) (Graham, "Explanatory Statement Regarding Proposed Regulations for the Protection of Game in the Wood Buffalo Park," 18 Dec. 1922, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). We know that Treaty Indians continued to hunt and trap in the park after it was created, as did the Métis for the first year of the park's existence, so perhaps these regulations were provisional (cf. Fumoleau 1975:255-6).

A memo to O. S. Finnie addressed this problem in 1923:

> As Wood Buffalo Park was created under the Forest Reserve and Parks Act, a separate Order-in-Council will be necessary to give Ministerial authority to permit native born Indians to hunt and trap within the area of the Park. This is to be done by amending the Regulations governing Parks, but only in respect to Wood Buffalo Bark [memo from ? to Finnie, 30 July 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Formal amendment would occur in 1926, following the enlargement of the park (see discussion below).

White trappers were excluded from the new park immediately. One reason for their exclusion was the threat they posed to wildlife. Another was that they engaged in a variety of other activities, including trading, hay-cutting, wintering horses, and erecting buildings. Finnie suggested that it would set a bad precedent to allow them to remain in the park (memo from O. S. Finnie to Mr. Daly, 22 Oct. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). The White trappers who left the park were located in the Jackfish River or Creek (flowing into Peace River) and the La Bute (following into Slave River) vicinities. They were very unhappy about having to leave, and there were continuing problems with trespass after 1922. A long memo was written in 1924 about this problem:

> Arden [a warden] informed me that three white men named Reisted Gaskill and Horncastle had gone into the park from the Big Slough 40 miles above Peace Point on an old Indian Trail which had been used by the Indians for years, had torn up the Indian traps, sprung them and left them lying to the side of the trail, set poison baits and threatened the Indians with revolvers. Gaskill had been warned three different times by Arden and apparently resented not being allowed in the park. It appears that previous to Christmas, Gaskill was trapping on Peace River opposite to the mouth of the Jackfish River and did not have any success. He went up to the Big Slough and he and the other two men went out on the Indian trail which goes into the headwaters of the Jackfish River. They intimidated the Indians and when Arden was up there early in February the Indians had not been out on the trail for six weeks. Arden went over the trail and saw the Indian traps with sticks in them. He found a skunk which had been poisoned. The Indians informed him that these men had set

> out poison baits and killed a lot of foxes and taken them to Red River to sell [memo from W. G. Cumming to Mr. McDougal, 6 March 1924, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

These trappers were "foreigners." They claimed that they were unaware that they were in the park, and in fact they were not charged, although their equipment in the park was seized (letter from John A. McDougal to Director, 24 March 1924, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Arden's account shows the problems which the Indians faced. While White trappers might respect one another's trapping areas (cf. Karras 1975:136), many of them forced resident Indians to abandon areas of traditional resource use, contrary to the situation described by Jarvenpa for northern Saskatchewan in the 1930s (1977:176). The long hand of the RCMP did not reach far enough to provide protection for the Indians in this regard. Such competition for resources and threats to Indian well-being continued outside the park boundaries and provided considerable incentive for Treaty Indians to enter the park.

The park records contain many letters from White trappers who wanted to gain legal admittance to the park in 1924 (PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1), but the park administration refused all requests. The trappers who had been forced out of the part felt that Indians who had access to park lands should not be allowed to trap outside the park:

> "Most of the trappers on the river above La Bute are complaining about the Indians trapping on the east side of the Slave River in the vicinity of La Bute. They say a treaty Indian has permission to trap on the Park, yet he does not trap there. This tends to crowd the white trappers, who have moved off the Reserve or Park to the east side of the river. There are 11 white trappers between La Bute and the 30th Base Line" [extract from Warden Browning's diary, 8 Jan. 1924, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

This sentiment would be found in trapline regulations written in the early 1940s by the provincial government.

Métis Trappers

Métis were also excluded from the park, but this decision was not made until after the park's first year. While the park administration was firm about disallowing non-Native park use, Métis represented a different problem, because many traditionally had used the park area and because their mode of production was like that of the Indians. In the summer of 1923, Finnie wrote to District Agent John McDougal, explaining his position:

> I have always been more or less of the opinion that it would be a hardship on the half-breed to restrict him from hunting and trapping in Wood Buffalo Park. You now ask if the half-breeds are to have some rights in the Park. I presume from this that there must be some controversy in allowing only treaty Indians to hunt and trap within this area. I would ask you to seriously consider this question and if you find that the consensus of opinion in the North country is that the half-breeds should also be allowed this privilege we will stand by your recommendation for this winter in any event and allow the half-breeds to hunt and trap within the area [letter from O. S. Finnie to J. A. McDougal, Dist. Agent, 23 Aug. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Breynat advised that there was a distinction between half-breeds who were born in the area and those coming from outside the area (the Lac La Biche Métis). He stated that "I do not see any reason why the latter ones should, in any way, be encouraged to come into the district" (3 Sept. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). As well, the half-breeds who were employed by traders could be prohibited, because they were able to obtain their necessities by selling their labor. Breynat overlooked the contribution from their hunting and trapping activities to their income. However,

> It would be an altogether different matter with the half breed natives who have to live an Indian life, although they may have houses at the Fort. ...[T]hey are not very many and quite often they have to meet so many difficulties to secure their living that to forbid them access to the reserve for hunting purposes would seem to be imposing upon

> them too much hardship [ibid.].

Indian Agent Card suggested otherwise:

> Mr. Card thinks there might not be many [half-breeds] affected but considers it might be better for administration purposes to treat half breeds as white men in all reserves as then they might work cutting wood etc., instead of leading the life of an Indian [letter from John A. McDougal to the Director, NWT&Y Branch, 5 Sept. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Card saw this issue as a way to get more Métis into the labor force and change their culture. McDougal's own opinion was that "Indian half-breeds," those Métis living with a fur trade mode of production, should be allowed continued access to the park, supporting Breynat's position.

The problem was resolved by Graham, who maintained that the definition of an "Indian" in the Indian Act

> ...is sufficiently embracing to take in those half-breeds who lead an Indian life, and if some of these persons refuse to come under treaty, that is their look out... [memo from Graham to Finnie, 27 Sept. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

He was generally opposed to Métis access to the park, on the following grounds:

> ...it is notorious that half-breeds are among the worst offenders against our game laws. ...
>
> That from a wildlife conservation standpoint, a great concession is made in granting hunting and trapping privileges to treaty Indians in a special game sanctuary, such as the Wood Buffalo Park, and that we may look for further claims for similar privileges from other classes if we allow half-breeds, as such, the privileges as recommended by Mr. McDougal [ibid.].

As a result of Graham's memo, Métis access to the park was disallowed.

It is most interesting to note that the band lists were not closed until after 1925, and that at least some Métis might elect to come under treaty (cf. letter from McDougal to the Director, NWT&Y Branch, 19 Feb. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1; cf. also Fumoleau 1975:256). Between 1922 and December 19, 1925, eight people (and their families?) joined the Cree band at Fort Chipewyan, nine joined the Chipewyan band at Fort Chipewyan, and seven joined the Chipewyan band at Fort Smith or Fitzgerald (letter from J. D. McLean to O. S. Finnie, Director, 19 Dec. 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Some of these persons appear to have been Indians who may not have registered earlier. Others were Métis, one of whom was Felix Beaulieu, whose father had taken scrip in 1899. Beaulieu had hunted in the park area since he was thirteen, and without taking treaty, he would have been banned from the park. However,

> ...he went to M. Card and took Treaty in order that he might hunt and trap in the Park. ... He intimated that he would not have taken Treaty had he not wished to trap in his old hunting grounds [letter from G. D. Murphy, Asst. Dist. Agent, to the Director, NWT&Y Branch, 6 Nov. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

Although there was some question about his eligibility to enter the park (cf. letter from McDougal to Finnie, 12 Aug. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1), his new Indian status must have decided the matter.

Traders

Many of the White trappers had combined trapping with trading, sometimes casually, and sometimes as a small-scale but formal operation. In an effort to discourage commercial endeavors in the park, all trading was disallowed. Two traders at La Bute, John Russell and a man named Waegentz (spelling uncertain), and two or three traders at Jackfish River, Charles Largen, John Bouvier, and possibly Isidore Simpson (a Chipewyan Indian), were affected.[3] Trading in the park must have been profitably, because the traders were reluctant to leave. Charles Largen felt that the situation was unfair:

> There has been a trader [Largen] at Jackfish River for the past year or more doing business with trappers and Indians, he has erected buildings there and considers it a hardship to have to vacate these buildings [letter from McDougal to ? , 12 June 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Finnie left no doubt about the park's position when he stated that "Under the Park Regulations this man is in unauthorized occupation and has no rights in the Park" (letter from Finnie to McDougal, 24 Aug. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Largen was to be permitted to continue only through the winter of 1923-24, and only if it would be a hardship to force him to move immediately. He was not allowed to hunt or trap in the park (ibid.). This ruling was applied to the traders at La Bute as well, who were required to leave the park by the spring of 1924 (letter from McDougal to the Director, 20 Nov. 1923, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). They gained an additional two years operation in the park, which was resented by Bouvier, who had left the park when he was supposed to: "Bouvier has moved but feels sore about Largen being still allowed to remain" (ibid.). The park administration refused requests to allow other traders to enter. A letter from Thomas Woodman in Fort Chipewyan requested permission to establish an outpost in the Jackfish River area, because "I have many Indians hunting for me who intend to enter the Buffalo Range in the vicinity of Jack Fish Creek. .." (letter from Woodman to John A. McDougal, 1 Oct. 1924, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). This request was denied.

Nor were Indians exempted from this provision. Although they retained hunting and trapping "privileges" in the park, they were not allowed to engage in trade, either for themselves or on the behalf of a trader elsewhere. J. J. Loutit, the HBC manager at Fort Chipewyan, wanted to open a post in 1924 at Jackfish River, run by Isidore Simpson (letter from Loutit to McDougal, 18 Oct. 1924, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Although this request was denied, apparently Simpson entered the park to trade anyway. A report stated that

> ...one Treaty Indian [almost certainly Simpson] built a cabin in the park [at Peace Point] and attempted to carry on trading in furs on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company, claiming his right to do so as a Treaty Indian ["Statement as to the Need for Eliminating Indians as well as other Hunters and Trappers from the Wood Buffalo Park," 25 Jan. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Besides resident traders, trading parties from the major posts located in the vicinity of the park were not allowed to continue their practice of "tripping" into the park area. These restrictions hurt the trade and resulted in some inconvenience for the trappers. They would also lead to strong opposition to the expansion of the park in 1926.

Treaty 8 Indians Enter the Park

Treaty 8 Indians were quick to take advantage of the protection the park provided from competition in hunting and trapping with White trappers. Finnie visited the park in 1925 and found that "The Indians are coming into the Park in increasing numbers because the white man is excluded" (extract from Mr. Finnie's notes during his official visit to WBP, 21 Dec. 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Moreover, they included Indians from as far away as Fort McMurray:

> ...many Indians, other than those who lived in the immediate vicinity, were being permitted to hunt and trap. ...
>
> The Indian Agent, Mr. Card, ...takes the view that all Indians who come under Treaty No. 8, are entitled to hunt and trap in the Park [memo from Finnie to Graham, 27 Oct. 1925, RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

It was at this time that ten treaty Indian families built cabins at Peace Point, among whom was Isidore Simpson (Graham?, "Statement as to the Need for Eliminating Indians as well as other Hunters and Trappers from the Wood Buffalo Park," 25 Jan. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Edouard Shortman (Tthigule) and his son Isidore, Chipewyan Indians from Birch River, also wanted to enter the park in the fall of 1926 (extract from Warden M. Dempsey's journal, 27 Sept. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A; also, AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.).

Violation of Game Regulations

Indian hunting and trapping in the park were not regulated by a permit system until 1926, so it is not clear how access to the park by Indians was controlled. Those Indians who were located in the Alberta portion of the park were subject to the closed seasons of the Alberta Game Regulations (letter from O. S. Finnie to J. A. McDougal, 18 June 1924, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1); those in the NWT portion followed the NWT game ordinance. This division created problems when game regulations differed, as they did in the winter of 1925-26: beaver could be hunted in the NWT but not in Alberta. McDougal reported the rumor that Indians, who would have resented the imposition of a closed season on them as a violation of their treaty promises, were killing beaver secretly on the Alberta side: "I heard from a reliable source Simpson has sold many beaver at Chipewyan, he claimed that they were killed out of the Park in Alberta" (letter from McDougal to Director, 13 Feb. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). He recommended that the whole park have uniform regulations on closed seasons, although this change would not be made until 1933. Meanwhile, Indians who violated game regulations would be evicted. In 1925, Finnie sent a memo to Graham in which he advised that

> I am recommending to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs that Indians convicted of infractions of the game

> or other laws within the Wood Buffalo Park, be excluded entirely from entering therein [30 Nov. 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

This provision, which may not have been enacted until 1928, would cause hardship to Indians evicted from the park, especially after Alberta introduced registered traplines in the early 1940s.

It is interesting to discover instances now and later of high status individuals, both Chipewyan (such as Simpson) and Cree, who seemed to be violating certain game regulations (regarding closed seasons) deliberately. Their actions, which were supported by the Indian Agent, might be interpreted as a form of protest. Also, it is significant that the Indian residents of the park were not involved in the formulation of game regulations which they might then have found sensible and been willing to follow.

Eliminating Indians from the Park

By 1925, the park administration regretted having allowed Indians access to the park and began investigating how they might best be removed. In January, 1926, a "Statement as to the Need for Eliminating Indians as well as other Hunters and Trappers from the Wood Buffalo Park" was written, probably by Graham (25 Jan. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3- pt. 1). He noted first that the government, thanks to Treaty 8, had the power to prevent Indian access. He then suggested that the previous years had been a trial period to determine whether or not the Indians "...would conform with the regulations..." (*ibid.*). His evaluation of the situation, based on a trip through the park in the summer of 1925, was "that the Indians are consistently breaking the regulations regarding close [*sic*] seasons," and "that they undoubtedly greatly increase the fire hazard..." (*ibid.*). One reason for this problem, he believed, was

Indian Agent Card's intervention. Card had told Warden D'Arcy (at Peace Point) and the Indians

> ...that Treaty Indians were not subject to the Game Regulations either in the Park or out of it, and that they could kill any kind of game at any time of year inside or outside the Park...

except buffalo (ibid.). According to Graham, Card told the Indians that they could kill beaver at any time and place, and he thereby had encouraged them to violate both park and Alberta regulations. Graham was afraid that the Indians were still killing bison, and he noted that in the northern range the Indians "...are extremely hostile to the presence of our wardens" (ibid.). He suggested that a system of annual subsidy might persuade the Indians to leave the park, and he strongly advised that Indians and Métis should not be allowed entry.

The park administration had already entered into negotiations with Indian Affairs to solve this problem. In December, 1925, a memo was sent to Duncan Campbell Scott, the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, in which

> ...Dr. Scott is asked to suggest some means by which all Indians may be kept out of this area [WBP]. As long as they are permitted to enter it will never be a sanctuary. At first we thought there would only be a few Indians but now we find there are probably over a hundred that will demand the privilege. Unless we can keep them out of the Park we will be in constant suspense regarding fires and the killing of buffalo, and the wild life of course will seriously suffer [memo from ? to R. A. Gibson, 9 Dec. 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Scott's response was that "...the vital interests of the Indians should be paramount and should have precedence even over the protection of the wild life" (memo from Scott to Hon. Charles Stewart, 29 Dec. 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Finnie followed this initial exchange with a letter purporting to show how the excluaion of the Indians from the park would actually benefit them:

> In the time to come I hope we may be able to make the Park a sanctuary and that no person will be permitted to hunt or trap therein. It is a wonderful game country and if given an adequate amount of protection will stock the adjacent country with all kinds of game. Unquestionably it will benefit the Indians, as well as all others living in the vicinity. This, however, can only be done by creating a large reserve for the Indians, perhaps north of Great Slave Lake - one of the conditions being that they should not hunt and trap in the Wood Buffalo Park [letter from Finnie to Scott, 30 April 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1; also in Fumoleau 1975:257].

A memo from John A. McDougal summarized the dilemmas for the park administration and Indian Affairs:

> Since the inception of the park there has been a determined effort to have it made into a game sanctuary, but by allowing Indians to kill game indiscriminately, this object would be defeated. I think that every unbiased person in the north country will agree that the time for the establishment of game sanctuaries has arrived, (especially noticeable this year owing to the scarcity of fur) and it appears obvious that the Wood Buffalo Park would be the logical one for the country contiguous to it.
>
> From the point of view of administration and conservation the Indian in the park is a nuisance and a menace, but at the same time they [sic] are many Indian families who for many generations have been hunting and trapping within the confines of the park who would no doubt deem it a great hardship to be forced to leave and hunt a new territory [letter from McDougal to the Director, 2 March 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

Indians were not excluded from the park, but the matter was never dropped completely by the park administration, which hoped one day to create the game sanctuary they believed Wood Buffalo Park should be.

WOOD BUFFALO PARK EXPANDS 1926

The Wainwright Bison

Wood Buffalo Park was enlarged in 1926 as the result of developments in another bison preserve, the Wainwright Buffalo Park.

This preserve had been established to protect the Pablo-Allard plains bison herd, one of the few herds of bison to escape extermination in the 19th century (cf. Ogilvie 1979:28-36; Rowan 1929:359; Lothian 1976:49). At Wainwright, these bison were fenced and protected from all predators. By the early 1920s they had outgrown the carrying capacity of the Wainwright range (WBNP Mitchell 1976:5; Ogilvie 1979:39-40), and the Wainwright administration was forced to decide how to reduce their numbers. There was public opposition to a bison slaughter at Wainwright (WBNP Mitchell 1976:5; Ogilvie 1979:40). Another alternative was suggested by the presence of Wood Buffalo Park, "...already equipped for bison protection, seemingly half-empty and waiting" (Ogilvie 1979:41; cf. WBNP Mitchell 1976:5). According to Louise Rourke, this option was suggested by Alberta MLA Jim Cornwall, the owner of Northern Transportation Company, the company which would profit from shipping the bison north (Rourke n.d.:291; field journal 1977 V:70).

The federal government decided to ship several thousand one and two year old plains bison to Wood Buffalo Park. The idea was opposed by biologists and even departmental officials who were worried about interbreeding between the two bison subspecies (plains and wood), and about the possible spread of tuberculosis and brucellosis from the plains to the wood bison. The Wainwright herd had contracted these diseases from domestic cattle, but the wood bison were not known to be infected (WBNP Mitchell 1976:5-6; Ogilvie 1979:37,41-42; cf. Lothian 1976:49).[4] Originally, the bison were to be tested for tuberculosis before leaving Wainwright, but this test was not administered,

> ...in the belief that only the older bison in the Wainwright herd were susceptible to disease and that if the young animals were segregated from the adults there would be little chance of them becoming tubercular. At least one departmental official disagreed with the decision [WBNP Mitchell 1976:6; also in Lothian 1976:63 without attribution to Mitchell; cf.

Ogilvie 1979:47].

Even Maxwell Graham supported the government decision, having decided that the two populations were not distinct subspecies after all, and that in any event they were unlikely to mix in the northern range (Ogilvie 1979:41-42). Between 1925 and 1928, over 6,000 bison were shipped by rail to Waterways and by barge down river to the park, where they were released on the west side of the Slave River in the vicinity of what is now known as Hay Camp (Raup 1933:17; Rowan 1929:359; Leising 1959:66; Ogilvie 1979:47).

Contrary to government predictions, the plains bison did interbreed with the wood bison, and they introduced tuberculosis to the region, with important consequences after World War II for bison management in the park. In the winter of 1925-26 the plains bison left the park, crossing the Peace River to feed in the lush meadows of the Lake Claire area (WBNP Mitchell 1976; Raup 1933:17). Faced with the problem of protecting bison which now lived outside park boundaries, the park administration decided to enlarge these boundaries to encompass this new bison range.

The Park Annex 1926

In January, 1926, Graham was seeking information in order to create "...a game preserve for the purpose of protecting therein the Wainwright buffalo" (letter from Maxwell Graham to J. E. Spero, Can. Nat. Parks Branch, Dept. of the Interior, 22 Jan. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Residents of the Fort Chipewyan region were, however, opposed to the expansion unless there were firm guarantees that their use of the area would not be impaired. Park Superintendent McDougal visited Fort Chipewyan in March to discuss park expansion, and he reported the sentiments of the people there to O. S. Finnie, the Director of the

NWT and Yukon Branch (letter from McDougal to Finnie, 25 March 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1):

> While at Chipewyan I obtained an expression of opinion from the leading residents about the proposal to take in an annex to the Wood Buffalo Park in that district. His Lordship Bishop Joussard strongly opposed any extension. He fears the Indians [sic] rights will be restricted in the future.

Joussard, according to McDougal, was concerned that the bison would damage the muskrat houses and the trapping in the area south of Peace River, and

> He expressed himself as being willing to have Treaty Indians from his District leave the Wood Buffalo Park and their rights cancelled if a fence were built [from Slave River to Jackfish River, to keep the bison in the park] [ibid.].

It is unlikely that the Bishop spoke for the Indians of the region, however. McDougal consulted the traders at Fort Chipewyan and reported that

> Mr. Colin Fraser although opposed to the extension will not object if the rights of Treaty Indians Half Breeds and Traders are not interfered with [ibid.].

John James Loutit, the HBC manager, and Thomas Woodman agreed with Fraser that they would not oppose the extension of the park as long as Native hunting, trapping, and trading rights were protected (ibid.).

These prominent residents were sufficiently concerned to send a petition or memorandum to Charles Stewart, the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, detailing their objections to the proposed expansion. The covering letter, dated May 6, 1926, stated that their purpose was "...to prevent the infliction of any restrictions upon the hunting and trapping privileges of the Cree Band of Indians...," which was the group located in the area to which the bison had travelled (letter from P. G. Mercredi, Fort Chipewyan, to Charles Stewart, 6 May 1926, RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). The petition explained,

> It is felt very strongly here by all classes of residents, that if a Dominion Park is established in the area inhabited by this Band of Indians that restrictions and prohibitions will be enforced little by little even under the most favorable circumstances, to such an extent, that in the very near future the Indians will be compelled to vacate the country which has been their home from time immemorial [*ibid*.].

The peition was signed by respected individuals such as Bishop Joussard, Magistrate John Wylie, Colin Fraser, and Philip Mercredi. Although Indian Agent Card's name does not appear on the document, Douglas Musgrave Rourke with the HBC claimed that he "formulated" it (Rourke n.d.:336), and it certainly reflected Indian concerns.

The peition contained four main points: the first reminded the government that Treaty 8 had guaranteed hunting, fishing, and trapping rights to the Indians, "'That they would be as free to hunt and fish after the signing of the Treaty as if they had never entered upon it.'" Secondly, it pointed out that the two bands had attempted unsuccessfully "for a number of years past..." to have hunting and trapping preserves established. The petitioners suggested that if the area which had been claimed for such preserves were annexed to the park, it would appear "...that the Government attaches more importance to the welfare of the Buffalo than it does to that of the Indians." Thirdly, they warned that if Indian hunting and trapping were restricted, the Indians would either starve or become a public charge. Finally, the petitioners, none of whom was Indian, claimed that "...the Half-Breeds and Whites who are voters here, and for whom this Memorandum speaks, have well-founded and time-established rights," particularly the right to hunt geese and ducks for winter provisions (memorandum from several Fort Chipewyan residents to Charles Stewart, 16 April 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1).

These arguments carried some weight, perhaps because the

Superintendent General of Indian Affairs had already agreed that Indian welfare should not be secondary to bison welfare. Finnie's correspondence suggests that the NWT and Yukon Branch may have faced opposition from Indian Affairs to the proposed park expansion. He continued, nevertheless, to claim that the government did have the legal right to terminate Indian hunting and trapping rights, quoting a clause from Treaty 8 often cited in park documents: that Indian subsistence rights continue "'...saving and excepting such tracts as may be required or taken up from time to time for settlement, mining, lumbering, trading, or other purposes'" (memo from O. S. Finnie to R. A. Gibson, Dept. of the Interior, 16 June 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A; Finnie's emphasis deleted). He added, "In this particular case we have legal right under the Treaty to take the lands for the proper protection of Canada's buffalo" (ibid.). However, he was willing to conciliate the Department of Indian Affairs in order to ensure his park, insisting that

> From the very first...it was clearly set forth that the hunting and trapping rights of all persons who hitherto had lawfully hunted and trapped in that district would not be prohibited in any way by the taking of that district into the Wood Buffalo Park [ibid.].

This position reverses that of two months' before to see Indians excluded from the park. He was willing to allow Fort Chipewyan residents to continue to collect their fuel supply in the park (ibid.). Another letter from Finnie suggested that the enlargement of the park would actually benefit the Indians and other local residents, "...who, in future, will also be protected against the encroachment of hunters and trappers from the outside" (letter from Finnie to McDougal, 30 June 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A).

The park was expanded on April 30, 1926, by Order-in-Council

P.C. 634. At that time, the northwest corner of the park containing Buffalo Lake was excluded. It was brought within the park on September 24, 1926, by Order-in-Council P.C. 1444 (Lothian 1976:62,66; Church 1976:8; cf. fig. 3).

New Access Regulations

The "Regulations respecting Game in Dominion Parks" (Order-in -Council P.C. 2415, 1919) were amended to permit hunting and trapping in Wood Buffalo park at this time: treaty Indians who had hunted and trapped in the area previously were to be granted access to the park, in either the "Old Park" or the annex, and "any persons" who had hunted and trapped in the annexed region prior to its inclusion within the park would be granted access south of Peace River (Order-in-Council P.C. 1444, 24 Sept. 1926).[5] These new provisions reflected government concern about the large numbers of Indians who had entered the park after 1922, when the matter of Indian access had been handled more loosely. For the park annex, officials limited from the beginning the number of individuals who would have access to the area by establishing a permit system and setting a firm rule of eligibility; all hunters and trappers present in the park annex at the time it was declared part of the park would be able to obtain permits to enter the park - but only those individuals and their families.

Not only did this ruling allow several White trappers to remain in the park, it also denied access to relatives of Natives who for one reason or another were hunting elsewhere that year. In effect, it split the Chipewyan band into two groups: the park Chipewyans and those without access to the park. They lived mainly in the Athabasca delta and along the Athabasca River. They were unhappy about this bureaucratic division of the band; the Chipewyan chief, who lived outside the park, had to obtain formal permission from park officials to visit members of his band living in the park. Crees were not placed in this situation, since they were all in the park in 1926, with the possible exception of one group which often trapped north of Big Bay on Lake Athabasca (field journal 1977).

Subsequently, the park was divided into three administrative districts, based on who was located there and on which game regulations were followed there (fig. 4). District A was that part of the Old Park located in the NWT. Only Treaty Indians could enter this district, and they were governed by NWT game regulations. District B was that part of the park located north of the Peace River, but in Alberta, governed by Alberta game regulations and available only to Treaty Indians. District C was the part south of Peace River, governed by Alberta game regulations but open to anyone, including treaty Indians, Métis, and Whites, who had occupied or utilized the area at the time it was declared part of the park. Treaty Indians who had access to districts A and B could also enter district C if they had hunted and trapped in the area prior to 1926. This situation caused some complaints in the 1930s by trappers who were restricted to district C.

The Permit System

A formal permit system was introduced in 1926. 119 general hunting licences were issued to 58 treaty Indians, 33 non-treaty Natives (including Métis), and 28 Whites (park records, Fort Smith). Indian trappers lived in identifiable settlements in the park, which included Jackfish River and Peace Point in district B, and in district C there were Quatre Fourches, Hay (Prairie) River, Lousy Creek, Baril (Deep)

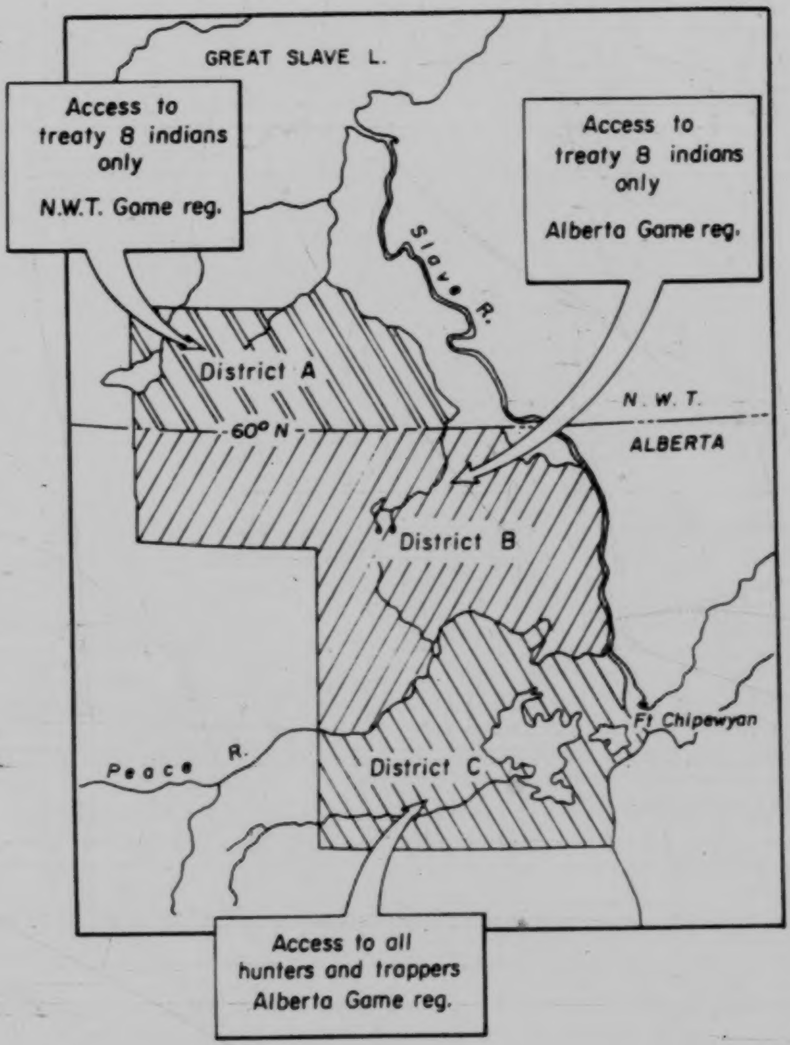
GREAT SLAVE L.
Access to treaty 8 indians only
N.W.T. Game reg.
Access to treaty 8 indians only
Alberta Game reg.
Slave R.
District A
N. W. T.
60° N
ALBERTA
District B
Ft Chipewyan
Peace R.
District C
Access to all hunters and trappers
Alberta Game reg.

Figure 4

Wood Buffalo Park Hunting and Trapping Districts

[Adapted from a map prepared by NWT&Yukon Branch, WBNP files]

Lake, Rocher River, Little Rapids, Portage Creek, Gull River, and Birch River (field journals 1977; 1978; letter from McDougal to the Director, 25 March 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1; cf. fig. 2). The Métis and White trappers, 61 in total, lived in section C, with some Métis living in the Indian settlements, and most White trappers apparently more isolated, located especially in the Embarras River and other prime muskrat trapping areas. In July, 1926, McDougal compiled a list of 31 White trappers in the restricted area between the 27th and 28th base lines (letter from McDougal to the Director, 30 July 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A), although an examination of their names shows that not all of these men could obtain permits. The White trappers in the park would continue to compete with Native trappers into the 1930s.

The park's policy on granting permits was not final in this early period, but continued to evolve. Generally, the park administration dealt with administrative difficulties on an ad hoc basis, with policy following the resolution of a particular problem. For instance, the members of a permittee's family were allowed to trap on his permit, which increased the number of trappers. No decision was made about the eligibility of children for permits of their own in the future, partly because the park administration still hoped that the park would eventually be declared a game sanctuary. But, in October, 1928, one Chipewyan lad wanted a permit so that he could begin "...trapping on his own," because he was now 18 years old. The permit was granted (memo from H. Richards to O. S. Finnie, 2 Feb. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). From 1927 to 1929, 127 Native trappers[6] and 24 defined as "White" were addedd to the list of permittees. The "Whites" included five mission personnel, a trader, and a representative of the National Museum (Additions to G.H.L. List - after 1926/27 to 1948/49, WBNP files, Fort Smith).

The park administration also considered a suggestion by two White trappers, who were trapping in the Embarras River area, that individual trapping areas should be granted to permittees. The men wrote McDougal,

> As you are probably aware, we have trapped in this locality for a number of years and would now like to apply for the exclusive right to a small area approximately 1-1/2 miles west of Pine Creek which includes two sloughs.
>
> Without the exclusive right to this piece of territory we cannot preserve the fur on our trapline and we would like to use the sloughs for Muskrat Farming [letter from Donald (Dan) Paterson and William Richardson to J. A. McDougal, 19 July 1927, PAC RG 85 v. 780 file 5767].

Locally, park officials favored this plan and began an informal program of trapping area allotments. G. D. Murphy, the Acting Superintendent of the park, wrote that

> ...last winter I endeavoured to allot particular areas to individuals and this system seemed to work out very well, all parties amicably agreeing to respect the allotment [letter to the Director, 4 Aug. 1927, PAC RG 85 v. 780 file 5767].

However, in Ottawa Finnie advised Murphy that such a practice was impossible under the parks regulations:

> The Dominion Parks Regulations which govern the area referred to do not make provision for the issue of licenses of leases of land for fur-farming purposes, therefore we are unable to grant such privileges and I would request you to inform all applicants accordingly [letter from Finnie to Murphy, 30 Aug. 1927, PAC RG 85 v. 780 file 5767].

Despite Murphy's optimism about local acceptance of assigned trapping areas, Indian trappers may not have been happy with such a rigid arrangement. In the future they would remain opposed to all efforts to divide the park into restricted use areas.

Enforcement of Park Regulations

Enforcement of park regulations was another area which required clarification and policy development. The park expanded its warden service, following an earlier suggestion by McDougal that

> ...in order that the Buffalo get proper protection from the Indians, I should strongly recommend that the present warden system be increased to such an extent that every Indian in the park could be closely watched, no matter what place in the park he might be [letter from McDougal to the Director, 2 March 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1].

The mandate of the warden service was threatened in 1928 by RCMP officers, who arrested two men for violations of the park game regulations. McDougal promptly telegraphed Finnie that "Both [Wardens Ireland and Arden] resent police interference in their districts. I consider it a reflection on warden service" (telegram from McDougal to Finnie, 1 Feb. 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). Corporal Bryant of the RCMP informed the park administration, however, that "...he considers the Park annex as a grazing ground only for buffalo," and that the RCMP were obligated, as elsewhere, to enforce the law (ibid.). Warden D'Arcy Arden said that the RCMP believed that the wardens only protected the bison and were not game guardians (diary of Warden Arden, June 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 792 file 6276).

Corporal Bryant also arrested Joseph Martin, "Chief Martin of the Crees," for taking beaver out of season. Martin had tried to sell the pelts to the HBC, which had refused to purchase them because of the closed season on beaver, and then he offered them to E. Reed, the trader at Embarras Portage. In court, Indian Agent Card appeared on Martin's behalf before Magistrate Wylie. He claimed that the RCMP had no authority in the park, an argument which the RCMP contested.

> Mr. Card then told the Court that he had told the Indians that they could when hungry disregard the game laws of the country and kill anything they required to eat. That the accused was starving and could not live without this

> beaver.
>
> The accused, Joseph Martin, was hunting within 15 miles of a trading post and he had been supplied with destitute Indian Rations all winter. ...
>
> Regarding the Indian agent, Mr. Card, giving the Indians permission to kill game in or out of season when hungry, he has consistently done this for the past few years and adopts a very antagonistic attitude towards the Police in general whenever we are concerned with any Indian [Crime report re Joseph Martin, 6 July 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4; cf. also diary of Warden Arden, June 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 792 file 6276].

Finnie tried to resolve these conflicts by affirming that in fact both wardens and RCMP had jurisdiction within the park, as the RCMP wer *ex officio* game guardians, and by suggesting that the two should cooperate (letter from Finnie to McDougal, 21 March 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). He also requested that the RCMP recognize the special status of the park by notifying the park superintendent

> ...when it was necessary to conduct an investigation within the Park, and also when they made arrests or secured convictions for violations of laws or regulations within the Park area [letter from Finnie to W. W. Cory, Dep. Min., Dept. of the Interior, 22 June 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3- pt. 1A].

As the warden service became more efficient and its duties better defined, situations of potential conflict declined.

The wardens could enforce game regulations through several sanctions of increasing severity: warnings, fines, imprisonment (possibly never used), and eviction. 1928 may have been the first year in which the park began cancelling permits of violators of game regulations. Pierre Ratfat, a Chipewyan Indian, temporarily lost his permit for having two beaver in his possession, which he had killed in closed season (telegram from McDougal to Finnie, 3 Jan. 1928; telegram from Finnie to McDougal, 4 Jan. 1928, both in PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). This sanction forced trappers and their families to leave the park, sometimes permanently. The Indians resented this punishment, which they interpreted as a violation of treaty promises and which caused unease about their increasing lack of control over the resources on which their lives depended.

Traders

Traders were a special category of park user. They had been evicted from the Old Park, but they managed to apply sufficient political pressure to be granted the right to trade in the park south of Peace River.[7] The park officials saw the traders as problematic, since they encouraged trapping. One memo suggested that the park should develop policy regarding trade in the park on the premise that the park should be closed to traders, rather than open (memo from Richards to Finnie, 2 Feb. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). Perhaps park officials hoped that the traders could be eased out of the area. In fact, the lack of firm policy allowed trade to increase in the park.

Prior to the annexation, trading outposts had been located at Hay River (HBC and Fred Fraser), at Embarras Portage (Reed), and on the south shore of Peace River (HBC, run by Isidore Simpson) (letter from McDougal to Finnie, 25 March 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1; memo from Richards to Finnie, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). These outposts were not manned on a year-round basis. Traders also practiced "tripping" into the park to trade with Indians and other trappers.

By 1929, there were nine trading outposts and one major "tripper" (letter from McDougal to Finnie, 26 Feb. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A):

Jackfish River - HBC

Hay (Prairie) River - HBC and Frederick Fraser

Birch River - HBC and Hamdon and Alley

Baril (Deep) River/Lake - Hamdon and Alley and Thomas Woodman

Embarras Portage/Athabasca River - Elwin B. Reed and Albert Savard

Tripper - Colin Fraser (based in Fort Chipewyan)

"Tripping" continued throughout the park annex. While problems arose among them, the park did not develop regulatory policies until the 1930s, which allowed the traders to become firmly established in the park.

Bison Hunting

Despite its policy of bison protection, the park administration initiated in 1929 a program of small-scale, seasonal bison hunts, in response to a suggestion by Breynat "...that quantities of dried buffalo meat, when available, be placed at the disposal of the residential school" (memo from ? to W. W. Cory, 25 Oct. 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). This request was related to the decision by the Oblates to terminate their St. Bruno farm operation, which had provided beef for the missions.[8] The author of the memo thought that this suggestion was a sound one, and he mentioned that bison hides were in demand: Senator McMeans had approached Cory of the Department of the Interior about the possibility of buying "...a couple of good buffalo robes" (ibid.). A small hunt would satisfy both requests.[9]

Mitchell reports on the beginning of the slaughter program:

> In January 1929 the first field kill occurred. It was coordinated by Mike Dempsey the Chief Buffalo Ranger. Brother Serrault and a helper from the Fort Chipewyan Mission assisted. Ten animals were taken and the meat went to the Missions at Fort Chipewyan and Fort Resolution which were the largest missions in the area at the time. Slaughters involving Park staff and Fort Chipewyan Mission staff (with their teams of horses with sleighs) continued through 1948. ...

> The hunts usually occurred in November at locations specified by the Buffalo Rangers. Apparently Ottawa approved the number of animals to be taken each year. Most of the meat went to the Missions for use at the residential schools and hospitals, however, some went to the needy in settlements in the vicinity of the Park [WBNP Mitchell 1976:8; also in Ogilvie 1979:51].

The willingness of the government to allow the hunting of park bison even on this small scale indicates government reluctance to support the missionary program with funds when other sources of assistance were available. That is, although the park had been established to protect the bison from Indian subsistence hunting, the bison could be hunted when it would save the government money, a factor which may have been important during the 1930s. Otherwise, the missions would have asked for higher per capita grants, and Indian Affairs would have had to budget more money to provide Indian pupils' rations.

The control over hunting and the distribution of meat was in the hands of the park administration. They channeled the meat through the missions and the Indian Agents. The Indians who were eventually the recipients did not participate in the distribution process. The acceptability of this early slaughter program was the foot in the door for a greatly expanded post-war commercial slaughter program which is discussed in chapter 7.

Park and Delta Indians: Different Situations

Indians still living in the park felt that they faced great difficulties. Their situation was markedly superior, however, to that of Indians living outside the park and denied park access. Chief Jonas Laviolette, the Chipewyan chief, pleaded with Jim Cornwall in 1927,

> "Plenty men look after the Buffalo, not one seems to care about us, we can starve and nobody cares.... Jackfish Lake has been my people's home for 200 years and more. If this

> country is given us for a reserve, and we get some help, the fur will come back again and me and my people will be happy again. We are so poor and miserable now that we are ashamed. Won't you, please, help us get our Reserve?" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:253].

A letter from Breynat stated that

> White trappers and Halh-Breed [sic] from the South are more and more invading their [Fort Chipewyan Indian] hunting ground. The fur already very scarce on account of the actual low cycle of fur bearing animals, has been depleted by recent forest fires throughout the country. While rat hunting is wisely prohibited before the 1st of March.
>
> On the other hand, our Indians have no means at all of earning any money during the whole Summer season while during during the Winter they are depending only on their fur catch [letter from Bishop Breynat to G. Hoadley, Min. of Ag. and Public Health, Alberta, n.d. (ca. 1928), PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4].

Even the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs acknowledged the severity of the problem:

> During recent years white trappers have invaded Indian hunting grounds in increasing numbers. The Indians are unable to cope with the competition and in consequence many of them are being reduced to destitution. ... It would certainly be most undesirable that the hunting Indian should become pauperized, and dependent upon Government relief...[letter from Chas. Stewart, Supt. Gen. of Indian Affairs, to Hon. John Bracken, Prime Minister, Prov. of Manitoba, and cc. to premiers to Ont., Quebec, Sask., and Alta., 2 Feb. 1929, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1].

Both bands continued to insist that Chipewyan and Cree reserves should be established, claims now complicated by the presence of an apparently inviolate national park which had been carved out of potential reserve lands. The government was receptive to the idea of a reserve, but the park administrators wanted to link its creation to the elimination of all hunting and trapping in the park. A memo written in 1928 shows that park officials were still committed to turning Wood Buffalo Park into a true game sanctuary:

> There are now nearly one hundred families of Treaty Indians who hunt and trap in the Wood Buffalo Park but we hope the time will come when these can be eliminated altogether. ... A Park should also be a sanctuary but as long as we allow Indians to hunt in it, it can never fulfil its full purpose. If we permitted the halfbreeds to hunt there too, we might just as well not have a park. I hope some day we may be able to set aside, somewhere north of Lake Athabasca, a reserve for the Indians where they can all live and hunt, and where they will be obliged to remain and not interfere with our park [memo from ? to W. W. Cory, 25 Oct. 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

Correspondence in 1929 followed similar lines:

> If the proposed reserve to the south of Lake Athabasca be created I would suggest that the Indians in area "B" be required to establish themselves permanently in the new reserve. These persons would also be entitled to hunt and trap in that portion of the Wood Buffalo Park to the south of the Peace river which is large enough and contains sufficient game to meet all their requirements [memo from Richards? to Finnie, 12 April 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

This proposition was not ambitious enough for Finnie, who wanted to eliminate all park hunting and trapping:

> I would be in favour of creating the preserve now asked for, but with the understanding that those Treaty Indians, now residents of Fort Smith, Chipewyan, Fitzgerald and vicinity be obliged to move out of the park and refrain from further hunting and trapping therein [memo from O. S. Finnie to J. W. Martin, Commissioner, Dominion Lands Administration, Dept. of the Interior[10], 16 April 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

The matter of access to the park, dividing Chipewyans into two groups, caused another complicating factor in the creation of reserves:

> "The setting aside, by the Government, of Hunting and Trapping Preserves, for Treaty Indians only, was discussed at length at Fort Chipewyan, and an area, much smaller than that originally asked for, was agreed upon. Some of the Chipewyan Indians, under the leadership of Chief Jonas Laviolette, wished for the immediate survey of the lands promised at Treaty. He claimed that every year more White men come into the country, build houses among them and soon they will have no homes if the land promised them is not surveyed and trespassers kept off. Both the setting aside of Hunting and Trapping Reserves guaranteed by Treaty, are considered very vital matters by the Indians who belong to the Chipewyan Band at Fort Chipewyan. The Crees are not

> similarly interested, as their hunting and trapping grounds are included in the enlarged Wood Buffalo park, from which White trappers are already excluded" [cited in Fumoleau 1975: 253].

This last passage contains three points of interest: first, although contrary to its assertion White trappers were not excluded from the park, the protection conferred on the park Indians by the limited access restrictions of the park was already evident. Secondly, by 1928 we can see the beginnings of the consequences of the division of the Chipewyans into two groups. Chipewyans living in the park and benefiting from its protection were not mentioned, or they were grouped with the Cree. They were not among the delta Chipewyan who were in such dire straits. Finally, by 1928 there was some agreement about the location of a Chipewyan reserve, one designed primarily to benefit Indians outside the park. Indians in the park had not abandoned their hope for their own reserves, but they had a temporary reprieve from their earlier economic difficulties.

Outside the park, difficulties worsened for Indians. The summer of 1928 saw dreadful influenza epidemics (cf. Fumoleau 1975:264-266) which made it "...impossible for the natives to secure the necessary food supply for the coming winter..." (Minutes of a meeting of the Committee of the Privy Council, 28 Nov. 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). It was not only Indian trapping which was threatened, but their very lives. Despite the fact that beaver were important food as well as fur animals, the season for beaver was closed in both the NWT and Alberta that year (ibid.; Proclamation by E. J. Lemaire, Clerk of the Privy Council, 20 Feb. 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1).

Breynat requested that beaver be opened in Alberta to prevent Indian destitution:

> Owing to scarcity of land fur while beaver are plentiful

> and in order to relieve Indians from unnecessary hardships I respectfully suggest that your department take steps to immediately obtain from Alberta government a proviso in beaver close season ordinance to allow Indians killing beaver this year in northern Alberta especially around Chipewyan stop Personally I am writing to Provincial Minister to strongly recommend above relief measure [telegram from Bishop Breynat to Duncan C. Scott, Sep. Supt., Dept. of Indian Affairs, 15 Nov. 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4].

This statement supports biologist Dewey Soper's contention that Alberta game officials knew little of game management in the early days (Soper 1978). Numbers of game were not well known, and the game regulations did not reflect local availability of animals. Indian Affairs endorsed Breynat's recommendation, sending it to George Hoadley, the Alberta Minister of Agriculture, who was responsible for fur trapping (letter from Duncan C. Scott to Hon. Geo. Hoadley, 16 Nov. 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). Breynat also wrote to Hoadley, requesting that Indians be allowed to kill ten to twelve beaver during the closed season, which was the amount recommended for the NWT by the Committee of the Privy Council (letter from Breynat to Hoadley, 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4; cf. Fumoleau 1975:288; Minutes of a meeting of the Committee of the Privy Council, 28 Nov. 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). The Alberta Minister refused the request, on the grounds that

> ...it is not considered advisable to discriminate in favor of the Indians by allowing them to trap beaver during the coming winter [letter from Game Commissioner to Duncan C. Scott, 28 Dec. 1928, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4; cf. Fumoleau 1975:288].

Allowing hunting would only slow down the beaver numerical recovery (ibid.). He added the suggestion that "'the Dominion Government... accept responsibility respecting rationing of the Indians who are in need'" (cited in Fumoleau 1975:288). This response suggests that Alberta was willing to allow Indians to become impoverished rather than antagonize voters in the province.

The following year, the Department of Indian Affairs made application

> ...to have two areas set aside as hunting and trapping reserves for the Indians of the Chipewyan and McMurray Districts. The area to be set aside for the Chipewyan Indians which comprises approximately 2,080 square miles, is situated south of the east [sic - west] end of Lake Athabaska. The eastern [sic - western] boundary of this suggested reserve adjoins the area to the south of the Peace River which was added to Wood Buffalo Park in 1926 in order to provide additional grazing grounds for the buffalo. The southern base line of the reserve for the Chipewyan Indians will be the 27th base line which base line is the southern boundary of the Wood Buffalo Park to the west of the Athabaska River [memo from ? to O. S. Finnie, 12 April 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

While the Chipewyans wanted land reserved for their use, they were "scared"

> ...that if the Indians at Jackfish Lake were given a Reserve they would be compelled to live within the boundries [sic] of the Reserve, and would also be forced to make a livelihood by following an agricultural pursuit. As the land in the vicinity of Jackfish Lake is not of a tillable nature, the Indians are aware that it would be well nigh impossible to make a living from this source [letter from Thomas Woodman for Chief Jonas Laviolette to Bishop Breynat, 15 July 1928, Archives of the Bishop].

Woodman's opinion was

> ...that this information is merely propaganda instigated by various white trappers who are anxious to hold down their trapping grounds in that area [ibid.].

According to this letter, Chief Laviolette and the band were more far sighted than given credit for:

> Although Chief Jonas is positive that he and his band are not fitted for the agricultural life, he wishes me to advise you that they are quite willing and anxious to become muskrat farmers. Apparently Jonas has heard of the white men who are making a livelihood from muskrat ranches on the outside, and he is of the opinion that he and his tribe could do likewise. It is his wish that each family of Indians belonging to the Jackfish Lake band should be alloted [sic] from three to four hundred acres of muskrat

> sloughts [sic], whereby they could raise their own rats and be assured of a steady supply for all time. It is also his wish that these individual muskrat ranches should be included within the boundries [sic] of the Indian Reserve that has been promised them by the Department. This would ensure greater protection for them, as it would then be impossible for the white trapper to tresspass [sic] on the ratting grounds as they are doing today [ibid.].

Woodman applauded the plan, saying that each acre could produce 25 to 30 muskrats per year with proper management (ibid.). It should be noted that the Chief was speaking on behalf only of the delta Chipewyans, not those Chipewyans living in the park.

The Alberta premier was sympathetic to the problems faced by the Indians in northern Alberta and open to the possibility of establishing reserves for the use of "hunting Indians" (letter from Office of the Premier, Alberta, to Hon. Chas. Stewart, Min. of the Interior, 14 Feb. 1929, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1). However, such negotiations took time, and meanwhile "'the increasing money value of fur...'" in 1929-30 and the increasing White population in competition for that fur continued to result in hardships for Native peoples living outside the park ("Condition of Hunting Indians in Remote Districts," PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1). The Chipewyan reserve did not materialize until the following decade.

THE ADVENT OF COMMERCIAL FISHING

A new enterprise entered the region in this period which could have helped the delta Chipewyan in their economic difficulties: in 1926, the McInnes Fish Company (later known as McInnes Products) began fishing Lake Athabasca for lake trout. This was the start of a commercial fishing operation which has lasted, almost without interruption, until the present (field journals; Schlader 1978; Mathewson 1974:105; Wuetherick 1973:A144). McInnes had fished Lesser Slave Lake prior to 1926, but Lake Athabasca, a "virgin" lake, looked more profitable. Equally important, adequate transportation was available: the fishing operation was contingent upon railway transportation from Waterways. McInnes ran a "whole fish" operation; the fish were cleaned, packed in ice, taken up river by barge to the railhead, the shipped to Chicago on the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway (Schlader 1978; MacGregor 1974:163; Ken Tingley per. commun. 1978). McInnes was allowed to fish Lake Athabasca as a result of a loophole in the Alberta fishing regulations: the province was zoned into several horizontal fishing zones, with Lake Athabasca located in the most northerly zone. The provincial regulations required that a fishing company be a resident of the zone in which it fished, a way of protecting local industry. The only exception to this policy was that the northern zone was open to non-resident fishing companies, a provision which would allow southern operators to exploit Lake Athabasca.

In 1926, McInnes shipped 300,000 pounds of fish from the lake, and in 1927 it shipped 937,000 pounds. In 1927 Lake Athabasca was fished commercially by Athabasca Fisheries as well, which shipped up a smaller catch of 35,000 pounds. The total of 1,272,000 pounds of fish was taken from the lake in two years (F. W. Goodspeed, "Re Trade on Athabasca River via Fort McMurray," 19 Dec. 1927; Ken Tingley, per. commun.). The National Fish Company began fishing the lake in 1929 or 1930. Roy Schlader, whose father was involved with the early McInnes operation, suggests that over two million pounds of trout were taken from the lake in the "early days" (Schlader 1978), a figure which may be low.

Locally, the fishing operation utilized eight or ten two-man boats, each manned by an "outside" fisherman and a local man, for a total of sixteen to twenty men fishing. There was also a support crew which prepared the fish for shipping. The few local people who were involved were not Chipewyan Indians, but rather Métis residents of Fort Chipewyan. The local residents earned only a few cents per pound (Schlader 1978). The profits went to enterprise located in the south which had no long term commitment to Lake Athabasca or the people who lived there; the long term benefits were in the south.

More importantly, commercial fishing began the depletion of the fish stocks of Lake Athabasca. The capacity of the cold northern lakes for sustained fish production is low, because of the low water temperatures, short growing season, and lack of nutrients (Rostlund 1952:68; Wynne-Edwards 1952:2-3; cf. McCormack 1975:78-80). D. S. Rawson (1959) suggested that if fished annually, two poundsper acre of lake might be all that Cree and Wollaston Lakes could support. Local people relied on these fish stocks to support themselves and their dogs. By 1927, they were worried about the impact of the commercial fishery on the various subsistence fisheries. That year Fort Chipewyan residents sent a petition to Scott, the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, asking that the government extend to the summer season that section of the fishing regulations for Lake Athabasca which prohibited winter commercial fishing in the western portion of the lake (letter from Breynat to the Hon. Min. of Marine and Fisheries, 12 Nov. 1927; letter from Breynat to D. C. Scott, 12 Nov. 1927; both in Archives of the Bishop). The letter responding to the petition misunderstood its intent and misnamed the lake: the Director of Fisheries hastened to inform the Bishop, however, that

> The amount of commercial fishing that has so far been

> carried on in Lake Athabasca, keeping in view its size, has been so small that it should have no appreciable effect on the fisheries of the lake. You may rest assured that the Department realizes the needs of the local people, and it will see to it that the fisheries are so safe guarded that there will be no depletion thereof [letter from William A. Found, Director of Fisheries, to Bishop Joseph Breynat, 13 Jan. 1928, Archives of the Bishop].

Breynat corrected Found's errors and presumably restated his concerns about the Lake Athabasca fishery. Found informed him that the department had set a quota of 2,500,000 pounds of whitefish and trout which could be taken from the lake during a one year period, although there was no explanation for the quota size (letter from Found to Breynat, 29 March 1928, Archives of the Bishop). It was probably based on the size of the lake and existing southern lake quotas, which would have been unrealistically high for this northern lake. Breynat was still not satisfied, and he met with Department of Fisheries officials in October, 1928. Found wrote him another letter which is ambiguous in terms of the role perceived by his department for Lake Athabasca Indians, but is clear in terms of the desirability to see commercial fishing continue:

> ...this Department is anxious that no unnecessary restrictions should be placed on the Indians in remote sections in procuring fish for their own needs, but not for sale or barter. It is realized that the Indians of the Lake Athabasca section have been in the habit of fishing, to an extent sufficient to meet their winter requirements, during the month of October, as otherwise they would lose time in carrying on their hunting operations during the winter. Up to the moment the conditions at Lake Athabasca are not such as to make it necessary to require the Indians of the Lake Athabasca district to discontinue this practice. It is of course in the interests of the region as well as of the country generally that such amount of commercial fishing as the lake can safely stand should be carried on each year, as such would not involve any depletion of the fisheries, and on the other hand will cause the expenditure of considerable sums of money in the local areas [neither assumption would be correct]. Such operations should also, as they develop, prove a source of desirable employment for a number of Indians of the district [it did not at Fort Chipewyan], and would also enable procuring the fish during the winter

> season for local food purposes from the commercial fishery [letter from Wm. A. Found to Bishop Breynat, 4 Oct. 1928, Archives of the Bishop].

Breynat was assured that the Fisheries Department "...is following the operations being carried on at Lake Athabasca with care, and is determined to prevent more fishing being conducted than the lake will safely stand" (ibid.). Since in fact no one was conducting scientific studies of the lake's fish populations, it is not clear how the department planned to supervise the fishing operation, and there is no evidence that such supervision occurred. Found's statements were conciliatory rhetoric. Data discussed later will show that in Lake Athabasca, the fish stocks were depleted as a result of the commercial fishery, and the Department of Fisheries was either unable or unwilling to monitor and control the situation as it had promised.

The summer fishing operation was another foot-in-the-door. As early as 1928, McInnes had applied for permission to fish for goldeye in Lake Mamawi, using three and three-quarter inch mesh nets. R. T. Rodd, the Edmonton-based Supervisor of Fisheries, travelled to Lake Athabasca in Jun, 1928, to investigate the goldeye fishing. He observed that the goldeye fishery was a small one and that fish were not found in the shallow Lakes Claire and Mamawi during the winter. He decided that McInnes should be restricted to nets no less than four and a half inch mesh in any area where they fished for goldeye. On the basis of his report, it was decided not to allow McInnes into the park (extract from Report dated 25 March 1929, by R. T. Rodd, and letter from J. J. Cowie to R. A. Gibson, 6 April 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). McInnes unsuccessfully tried again in the late 1930s, and it finally expanded its operation into the park after World War II, developments considered later in the study.

THE 1930s: THE DEPRESSION YEARS

The Fort Chipewyan region was affected both directly and indirectly by a variety of economic, political, and administrative consequences of the "Great Depression" of the 1930s. This section outlines the "external" factors influencing the region, especially administrative shifts in the federal government, new developments in Alberta, and the impetus given to northern development by the Depression. The remaining sections of this chapter will turn to the more immediate developments in the region, especially those affecting Wood Buffalo Park and its use by the Natives who lived there, as well as the Chipewyans in the delta and their efforts to acquire a reserve.

Federal Administrative Changes

The response of Canada as a whole to the onset of the Depression was to vote out the Liberals and Mackenzie King and vote in a Conservative government, led by R. B. Bennet (Creighton 1972:489; Finnie 1942:68; Lothian 1977:17). The new government immediately moved to reduce its expenditures. One of its first actions was to restructure the Department of the Interior, a move necessitated by the legislative transfer of natural resources and control to Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1930-31. The Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch was affected by this restructuring, in what Richard Finnie interpreted as little more than an internal purge:

> In 1930 Canada had a general election, and the Government changed. The Great Slump had started, which brought forth a cry for retrenchment in the civil service. The Department of the Interior was hit hard. The shibboleth of economy was made the excuse for political juggling. The Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch, built up in ten years to an efficient and productive organization, just hitting its stride, was dissolved. The Director [Finnie's father], highly respected everywhere with a reputation for

> fairdealing, was superannuated while still in his prime [in 1931, along with key members of his staff]. ...
>
> Hardly a man was left who had ever lived in the North, or who had any first-hand understanding of conditions there. The men who were retained were minor clerks and executives [Finnie 1942:68].

When the Liberals were returned to power in 1935, they continued the reorganization begun by the Conservatives. In 1936, the Department of Mines and Resources was created, under Minister Thomas A. Crerar and senior Deputy Minister Dr. Charles Camsell. The new department contained five branches, including Indian Affairs and Lands, Parks, and Forests, each with its own director. The former Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch became a bureau under Lands, Parks, and Forests (Finnie 1942:68-69; Lothian 1977:18).

Finnie had harsh words for the new bureau:

> Newspapers were given stories about the Bureau's concern for native welfare, but almost everything done for or with the natives was at the behest of the missions or the Hudson's Bay Company. ...
>
> Most of the time the Bureau was catering to the large, influential interests, which, curiously enough, were seldom satisfied or grateful; they always wanted more [1942:69].

Finnie's comment about larger interests is interesting in reflection of the long history of government-business cooperation it suggests for the north (cf. Fumoleau 1975:262). Rea's comments on government policy (below) indicate that this topic has not yet been adequately explored.

At the local level, the administration of Wood Buffalo Park and Indian Affairs was characterized by continuity of personnel and policies. These are discussed in the following section. A new parks act was passed in 1930, as parallel legislation to the transfer of resources to the prairie provinces. This act

> ...confirmed the parks as absolute game sanctuaries, made no provision for mineral exploration or development and limited the use of green timber to that essential for park management purposes [Lothian 1977:17].

Alberta was unhappy with the restrictions on development within Canada's national parks located within its boundaries (ibid.:16-17). The province's complaints were met by the provision that when park land was relinquished for park purposes, it would revert to the province. This new legislation strengthened the anti-development posture of Wood Buffalo Park, although the park continued to be administered by the Northwest Territories and Yukon Bureau, not by the Parks Bureau.

Alberta and the Depression

Alberta entered the Depression having finally gained control over its lands and resources, a process begun in earnest in 1922, after the Alberta Liberals were removed from office (1921). An interim agreement had been reached between Alberta and Ottawa in 1926, with final agreement in 1929. The Natural Resource Agreements were incorporated into the British North America Act in 1930, with the formal transfer of lands in 1931. These agreements created a new framework for provincial activity in the north after World War II. In the pre-war years, they were important mainly because they provided for the protection of Indian hunting and fishing rights off reserves and ensured that the provinces would make land available to allow the federal government to meet its treaty obligations to the Indians (Lothian 1977:16-17; Cumming and Mickenberg 1972:211,230; Elton 1979:110-111; Creighton 1972:478).

Alberta, an agriculture-dependent province, was hit badly by the Depression. Other countries had erected tariffs against Canadian wheat, cattle, and lumber, and the Conservative government in Ottawa resorted to similar tariff protection for its own industry, with the result that

> ...these measures brought no comfort to the staple-producing regions of the country and simply tended to transfer a larger slice of a diminished national income to the manufacturing provinces of central Canada [Creighton 1972:491].

Alberta became increasingly politically militant during the Depression (Richards and Pratt 1979:32; Elton 1979:111-2). The province supported the Social Credit Party, which "...identified the large eastern industrial and financial interests as the causes of their [Albertan] troubles ..." (Elton 1979:112). Social Credit had little success, however, in altering the status quo. After 1937 the Alberta government under Aberhart "...de-emphasized the attack on financial power..." (Richards and Pratt 1979:34), paving the way for the province's post-war economic growth, which would include the province itself acting as an entrepreneur (ibid.).

Northern Development

Conditions in the north were not as deplorable as they were on the prairies and other parts of Canada. The Depression accelerated the development of mining and transportation systems in the north, and it also resulted in continued high levels of fur production. Rea explains,

> The world economic collapse of 1929 created conditions highly favourable to the production of gold, so it is not surprising that there was renewed interest in the mineral resources of the Canadian northwest at that time. Even before the price of gold was officially increased to $35.00 an ounce the declining general price levels and the resulting increase in the purchasing power of an ounce of gold caused producers to subject existing gold deposits to more intensive working: and prospecting, aided by the aeroplane, swept into the undeveloped District of Mackenzie [1968:112-3].

Costs for northern development were very high, and some known mineral deposits, such as the lead-zinc ore at Pine Point, were not considered rich enough to warrant investment (cf. Phillips 1967:148).

Rea discusses the factors which resulted in such high costs to industry. During the 1920s and 1930s, government policy was essentially one of laissez-faire, in which territorial development was left to the initiative of private enterprise: "public policy left to the functioning of free markets the process of determining the extent to which northern resources would be developed" (Rea 1968:345).

> The role of government in territorial life was limited to that authorized by Adam Smith - the maintenance of justice and civil order, defense against external enemies, and the undertaking of certain activities which private enterprise could not, or should not, be expected to undertake. The latter category was very narrowly defined in the case of federal policy in the north but, ...in addition to providing routine administration in the Territories, the government did provide some transportation facilities, it sponsored scientific work and services such as geological mapping, and it provided some communication facilities...[Rea 1968:345].

Even had the government wished to intervene more directly, the economic situation during the Depression would almost certainly have prevented it. Therefore, private investors had to demonstrate the profitability of an enterprise before government would be willing to invest in it, to ensure that the government used its money wisely. Yet, except in regard to the most valued minerals, private enterprise could not afford to invest in the north without government supplying some infrastructure:

> ...only the minerals which had a very high value per unit weight of product could be developed and only the very richest deposits of even these minerals could be successfully exploited. Under these conditions the mineral development in Mackenzie District was limited to the production of gold and radioactive metals [Rea 1968:118-9].

Rea points out that in other parts of Canada, most infrastructure costs are borne by the public through government assistance and initiative,

> ...because normally they serve not only specific users but the general public as well. ... But in the Territories, because of the extraordinary dispersion of the small population and the dispersion of the centres of primary resource development, it was difficult to justify public participation,

> let alone public initiative, in creating such facilities. Consequently, many investments in transportation and power facilities which elsewhere might have been considered investments in social or public capital were treated as though they were investments in primary plant itself [Rea 1968:203].

The assistance which the federal government provided in the north was related to the exploration and mapping process. In 1930,

> ...the Royal Canadian Air Force began systematically photographing key areas of the Mackenzie District so that aerial mosaics could be assembled to facilitate the work of prospectors. Government geologists and investigators, too, were in the field [Finnie 1942:120; cf. Watt 1980:182].

These included Geological Survey of Canada personnel in the Great Slave Lake area (Phillips 1967:148). As well, the government provided some minor assistance to the transportation industry. In the 1920s, it built some common use wharves at northern settlements, including Fort Chipewyan, and in the 1930s it marked all the river channels (McConnell 1965:92). However, the government was unwilling to invest directly in either northern mining or northern transportation. It was left to private enterprise to develop these industries.

Northern Mining

Mining exploration in the 1920s paid off in the 1930s, with the rise in the value of precious metals. The first major mine was developed in 1930 on Great Bear Lake at Port Radium, to exploit a rich pitchblend-silver deposit discovered by Gilbert Labine in 1928 and staked in 1929. Eldorado Gold Mines Ltd. provided the development capital (Rea 1968:116; Finnie 1942:121; Phillips 1967:147). The mine faced serious transportation and power problems. The former was resolved by the creation of a new transportation company (see discussion below), and the latter, by the "re-activation" of the Norman Wells operation, with the diesel oil produced there used to generate electricity at the mine site (Rea 1968: 116-7; Finnie 1942:121). Rea points out that

> The development of this mine at Port Radium had a marked effect on the economic character of Mackenzie District in so far as it encouraged the improvement of transport facilities, provided a market for local oil production and demonstrated, to government and industry alike, the possibility of large-scale mining operations under far northern conditions. These effects were reinforced after 1935 by the development of auriferous quartz-mining at Yellowknife [1968:117].

More immediately, the Great Bear Lake discoveries started a new rush to the north, described by Frederick Watt, a journalist-turned-prospector:

> The discovery was a beacon, a solitary ray of hope to an economy that was floundering in the darkness that followed the crash of 1929.
>
> Great Bear became a magnet to men battered by the ravages of the Depression. Its name was magic, and they began to follow LaBine's trail north [1980:2].

This mine was kept secret until the summer of 1931, when mining equipment began to be moved north. The big rush took place in the summer of 1932, with many prospectors headed for the area the previous winter. Two trappers from Fort Chipewyan described the situation for Watt in February, 1932:

> Half the North Country, they reported, was converging on Great Bear. Many parties had headed down the Mackenzie the previous autumn [1931] but had been held up at Fort Franklin...by the freeze-up. For some weeks, though, the invasion had been under way again [Watt 1980:19].

The development of Great Bear Lake mining coincided with an economic upswing in Canada in 1933 (Creighton 1976:19). Two new gold mines were discovered and brought into production in the later 1930s, at Yellowknife and at Beaver Lodge on Lake Athabasca. At Yellowknife, gold had been discovered by Klondikers, but the area was not explored seriously again until the Geological Survey began its investigations. Exploration was intensive between 1933 and 1937, with many prospectors coming from the Great Bear Lake area (Watt 1980:227). "Con Mine," owned by Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada, produced its first gold brick in 1938 (Rea 1968:117-8; Breynat 1955:237; Phillips 1967:148). Other gold mines followed in the area. By 1939,

> For the first time [in the NWT]...the value of mineral production exceeded the value of the fur catch. Significantly, not one Indian was yet employed in mining or prospecting at that date [Fumoleau 1975:20-21].

Although outside the NWT boundary, the Fort Chipewyan region was part of this economic zone.

Consolidated Mining and Smelting opened a second mine, Goldfields, at the east end of Lake Athabasca. The Beaver Lodge area had originally been explored in 1915. Gold was found in 1936, and development work was begun in1937, when "Goldfields" was incorporated. The mine was brought into production in 1939 (MacGregor 1974:165; Wuetherick 1973: A139-140; Mathewson 1974:69). Father Picard recalled that Goldfields was an "awful place," less structured and law abiding that its successor, Uranium City (field journal 1977 V:71).

Transportation Developments

The boom in northern mining led to a boom in northern shipping. At the beginning of the 1930s, the HBC's Mackenzie River Transport Company enjoyed a near monopoly on the river system, and its freight rates were accordingly high (Rea 1968:215). Stimulated by the mining developments, the company invested $100,000 in additional equipment between 1930 and 1935 (*ibid*.:214-5). It was joined on the river in 1934 by a new Northern Transportation Company, formed to carry the freight for the Eldorado Mines on Great Bear Lake. In 1937 this company became a subsidiary of Eldorado (Rea 1968:215-6), a result of the vertical integration which lack of government intervention was forcing on northern companies. 1934 was the year of a boatbuilding boom at Fort Smith, to construct barges and power boats to supply the oil and mining industry (Finnie 1942:121-2). McInnes Products also developed its own transport system in order to maximize profits from its fishing operation. The company's boats carried freight downstream, including beer for Goldfields, and carried fish upstream (Schlader 1978). Goldfields Transportation Company was created to supply the Goldfields operation, and yet another company on the river was McLeod and Sons (W. B. Hunter 1971: 237; also in Wuetherick 1973:A142; MacGregor 1974:165). This river boom gave Fort McMurray and Waterways five prosperous years, which halted briefly in 1941 with the onset of World War II (MacGregor 1974:165).

Rea points out the major problem with such competition in transportation in the north:

> ...when they [transportation facilities] were provided even by relatively large single firms they were small in scale. Consequently, they lost the economies of scale which are so conspicuous in these fields....The consequence was unusually high costs per unit of the commodity supplied...[Rea 1968:204].

It was not the low rates that such competition might be expected to bring. All northern users, from mining companies to trappers, had to bear these high costs.

The discovery of gold on Lake Athabasca led to proposals for road construction. A road from Fort McMurray to Goldfields was proposed as a joint federal-provincial project in the fall of 1936. The Nor'west Miner suggested that a road should be built down the Peace River to Fort Chipewyan and along the north shore of Lake Athabasca to Goldfields (Ken Tingley, per. commun.), a suggestion which would see some action in the 1950s. The federal government rejected these proposals on the grounds that a road might not be really useful to the mining industry, while the river transportation companies, having invested in new equipment, favored government spending on river dredging as a way of dealing with problems created by seasonal low water levels (ibid.).

Outside Trappers

The low fur prices of 1928 and the improving outside economy encouraged many White trappers to leave the north. The Depression brought them tack again (cf. Karras 1975:10; Jarvenpa 1980:55). Prices for furs may not have been high, but they remained stable relative to the now-depressed prices for goods (cf. Asch 1977:52). As before, many of these outside trappers were "...white homesteaders [who] came along to augment their meager incomes by trapping muskrats" (Karras 1975:56). Karras recalled that none of the trappers obeyed the game regulations (1975:50,167; cf. Jarvenpa 1977:179), but that where a trapper was able to trap without competition for many years, he tended to practice his own version of conservation (Karras 1975:135-6, 167). However, without control over trapping areas, the fur bearers were inevitably trapped out. Karras himself had advocated registered traplines since 1938, he said, and other White trappers agreed (ibid.:136).

These White trappers were increasingly "professionals," running their trap lines as efficient business enterprises:

> The canoes [of these trappers] were of excellent quality and make, Peterborough and Chestnut freighter models, used by a unique clientele. Their owners were not around for they were "Outside" on business or on holiday, possibly in Prince Albert, Montreal, or Norway. These men would show up in the village in later summer and embark for the North once again [Karras 1975:19-20].

They brought in supplies (ibid.:38) so that they did not spend their time subsistence hunting, but could devote it entirely to trapping. They managed their affairs so that they were not in debt to the trader, in contrast to the Indian trappers, who were "...always at least a year behind the white trappers. Most of us paid cash for our grubstakes" (ibid.:178). Also, most of them sold their fur where they could obtain higher prices than in the northern communities (Jarvenpa 1977:176). As Jarvenpa observes,

> The quest for fur among the white trapper population was an individualistic enterprise which commanded a high investment in time and energy, and the virtual absence of a social or community life made it possible to channel effort into a single economic activity [1977:174].

The White trappers were "specialists" in trapping, and they created serious problems for Native residents.

THE 1930s: THE FORT CHIPEWYAN REGION

Native peoples in the Fort Chipewyan region were affected less by the Depression *per se* than by their individual access to the park, by whether or not they were status Indians, and if they were, whether they were Chipewyan or Cree, and by whether or not they had sources of income other than from trapping. Native peoples with access to the park were protected from the new wave of non-Native trappers which the Depression had sent into the bush. Although they still had problems with the White trappers who remained in the park, these had dwindled in number in the 1930s. Of greater importance to them was the development of park regulations covering trapping, hunting, and trading, activities which were complicated in turn by the changing numbers of animals. Also, the park administration continued small-scale bison hunts, introduced wolf control measures, and began a muskrat conservation program to increase the fur available to trappers, as a way of bolstering the local trapping economy. There was a small amount of wage labor available in the park.

The matter of access to the park was the cause of new interband alliances and intra-band divisions. The park Chipewyans and Crees faced the same dilemmas, while relations between park and delta Chipewyans were increasingly impeded. Non-park or delta Chipewyans tried unsuccessfully to gain access to the park. They faced severe competition from White trappers, and the 1930s saw the continued impoverishment and underdevelopment of delta Chipewyans and their traditional lands due to the effects of this competition. They continued to ask for the creation of a protected reserve, which they obtained in 1937. The creation of the reserve forced some Métis and White trappers to relocate their trapping areas. Métis and Whites in the Alberta portion of the region worked at fur trading, commercial fishing, river transport, and wood cutting and sawmill work, and mining at Goldfields.

WOOD BUFFALO PARK

The park administration developed a policy in the 1930s based on two goals which were directly opposed to each other. On the one hand, the park was committed to allowing continued hunting, trapping, and subsistence fishing by Natives and some Whites within its boundaries. On the other hand, it was philosophically committed to establishing a game sanctuary and eliminating all Native use. Efforts to realize each goal can be seen in park actions in the 1930s and into the 1940s.

Regulating the Trade

The regulation of trading activity within the park, one of the first problems the park faced in the 1930s, was rooted in this contradiction. Although unrestricted trade encouraged hunting and trapping, contrary to the idea that the park should be a game sanctuary, at the same time the interests of these park users had to be safeguarded. In 1926, local traders had been assured that they would not be evicted from the park, but this assurance had not been incorporated into subsequent park regulations, despite a memo sent to the Deputy Minister of the Department of the Interior (memo to H. H. Rowatt, 16 Jan. 1932, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). However, provision was made for the park superintendent to grant permits allowing individual traders to enter the park (regulation no. 21[a], P.C. 1444). These assurances were tested in the spring of 1929, when Thomas Woodman requested permission to re-open the outpost which he had operated four years earlier (1925) in the vicinity of Point Providence and Jackfish Creek, and E. (Jean?) Boisvert wanted to return to trade at Big Island. Boisvert had traded from 1921 to 1926 at Jackfish River and Portage Creek. Both applications were refused on the grounds that there were enough posts south of the Peace River to satisfy all the people there (letters from E. Boisvert to J.A. McDougal, 16 April 1929; from Thomas Woodman to McDougal, 1 April 1929; from McDougal to Woodman, 6 June 1929; PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A), in spite of the fact that more competing traders might benefit residents by lowering the prices of trade goods and increasing prices for furs.

A related problem arose in 1929, when Mrs. Fred Fraser, the wife of a Fort Chipewyan trader with park privileges, wrote to John McDougal for an explanation of why "Northern Traders," a new company in Fort Chipewyan, "...are allowed to open outposts and have their men trip within Park areas." She complained that the company's local manager, Thomas Woodman, had already sent "good sized outfits into the Park..." and planned to send better ones (letter from Mrs. Fred Fraser, Fort Chipewyan, to J. A. McDougal, Dominion Parks Commissioner, 27 Sept. 1929, PAC RG 85

v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). This and other correspondence suggests hostility between the Frasers and the Woodmans, which may have derived from fur trade jealousies growing out of the 1928 season, which had been a poor one for fur, and many small companies went broke, with the HBC acquiring most of their assets (McConnell 1965:89). It continued to be difficult for the remaining small companies to meet their expenses, let alone make profits.

Woodman explained that he had resolved this problem by making a partial sale of his business to Northern Traders (NT):

> In regards to my connection with the Northern Traders, due to reverses caused by declining fur prices, this applies especially to Muskrat market, I was forced last summer to seek ways and means of recapitalizing the business at this point, I did make a sale to the Northern Traders, in part and conditionally, but not in entirety. My outstanding balances, due to me by customers and Indians amount to over $30,000....The Northern Traders have nothing whatever to do with the outstanding balances, neither did they [sic] purchase or sale include, goodwill, Deep Lake outpost or privilege to trade in Park [letter from Thomas Woodman to J. A. McDougal, 4 Dec. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

Woodman was hedging. McDougal had informed him that if he had, in fact, sold out to a new company, he would no longer have the right to trade in the park as its agent (letter from McDougal to Woodman, 28 Nov. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). Between 1926 and 1929, the park administration had decided that trading privileges in the park should not be transferable to individuals or companies not in the area in the fall of 1926 (memo from O. S. Finnie to R. A. Gibson, 6 Feb. 1930, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). While Woodman claimed that he had not sold his trading posts in the park to NT, part of his sale had included two outpost buildings located in the park, one at Baril (Deep) Lake and the other at Birch River (letter from Manager, Canadian Credit Men's Trust Asso., Ltd., to Mrs. Fred Fraser, 30 Jan. 1930; memo from O. S. Finnie to

R. A. Gibson, 6 Feb. 1930; letter from O. S. Finnie to J. A. McDougal, all in PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A).

James Cornwall, a Director of NT, wrote a letter to Finnie in support of Woodman which is interesting for its discussion of northern trading arrangements:

> The post in question on Wood Buffalo Park are [sic] the property of Woodman. He is trading there as he has always traded in the same manner and under the same financial conditions that have governed his operations in that country. These conditions apply practically to every free trader in the north, that is a trade on credit furnished by wholesale firms and others. The buildings and property of these traders belong to the traders. To obtain credit they usually hypothecate anything personal they may have of value. The financial worth of these buildings are usually of little commercial value unless supplied with goods. Woodman has secured trade backing from the Northern Traders company as many other traders in the north have done, this is a simple practice of the larger trading companies.
>
> Woodman's position is exactly the same to-day as it always has been. His reasons for changing his backing was to simplify his financial arrangements, previously to making the transfer of credit he was outfitted by various wholesalers with credit. During the slim years this caused him financial unpleasantness and difficulties but where he is backed by an outfit that can furnish him with everything he requires, his power to carry on business is stronger and he has less worry, it relieves him from going outside to discuss credits and leaves him more time to attend to his business as a trader.
>
> Woodman's trading policy is perfectly honorable and he is doing nothing that he shouldn't do. I am unable to see wherein he has committed any offense or violated any of the conditions under which he has been permitted to trade in Wood Buffalo Park in the past. The people who complain about Woodman are trouble makers and merely desire to remove him as a competitor and their backing is obtained in exactly the same manner as Woodman's only through a different channel [letter from J. K. Cornwall to O. S. Finnie, 1 March 1930, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt.1A].

NT had an obvious interest in ensuring that Woodman continued to trade in the park, where 60% of his trade lay and which would otherwise be out of bounds to the company. Finnie came to the same conclusion:

> Evidently the Northern Traders Limited have an interest in Mr. Woodman's trading post in the park since the papers on this file indicate that he [Woodman] was instructed by the

> Assistant General Manager of that company to secure all the beaver pelts he could [memo from O. S. Finnie to H. H. Rowatt, ca. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870].

Woodman pleaded to be allowed to remain in the park on the basis of his financial need and the services he was providing to the Indians. The only way he could collect the debts which were owed to him was by continuing to trade in the park:

> ...due to the fact that all the traders, are tripping, one is compelled to keep in constant touch with the Indians during open fur season, in order to collect accounts, and also to keep them supplied with provisions from time to time [letter from Thomas Woodman to J. A. McDougal, 4 Dec. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

Mrs. Fraser had little sympathy with this argument. In a letter to the Minister of the Interior, she wrote,

> Other traders forget [forgive] these back debts each year. All they are good for is to hold over the Indian's head so we will not have to give him much more debt the following year....[T]he Indians owe us all [29 Jan. 1930, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

In an attempt to resolve this dilemma, park staff held a meeting in Fort Chipewyan January, 1930, with the "Fur Trading Interests," which included Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fraser, Colin Fraser, Ali Hamdon, and L. J. Mercredi (HBC) (minutes of a meeting held at Chipewyan 2 Jan. 1930 re trading in WBP Annex, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). Evidently no decision to change Woodman's status resulted from that meeting, because he continued to trade through 1930-31.

However, in 1931 Woodman was convicted of 26 charges of illegal trafficking in beaver pelts under the Alberta Game Act, and his permit to trade in the park was cancelled. Also, he was fined $260 and costs. Hamdon and Alley had their permit cancelled on the same grounds, and they were fined $50 and costs on each charge (totalling $250 in fines)(letter from M. J. Dempsey to J. A. McDougal, 14 Aug. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 889

file 9358; letter from Asst. Director to Benjamin Lawton, Game Commissioner, Dept. of Ag., 28 Aug. 1931; letter from O. S. Finnie to J. A. McDougal, 1 Dec. 1931; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A; Govt. of Alberta [GA] Charges and Convictions in Fort Chipewyan 1931; memo from O. S. Finnie to H. H. Rowatt, ca. 1931; memo from ? to H. H. Rowatt, 16 Jan. 1932; both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). Hamdon and Alley's defense was that they accepted the beaver pelts, most or all taken from Native trappers residing in the park annex, because "...the Indians were destitute," a claim which was rejected by RCMP Sergeant W. H. Bryant, who had investigated the incident.[11] Their convictions and subsequent cancellations allowed the park to rid itself of a problem which it had not been able to otherwise resolve.

More importantly, this situation led the park administration to consider banning all "transient trading" or "tripping[12] (letter from Assy. Director to Benjamin Lawton, Game Commissioner, Dept. of Ag., 28 Aug. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A) and introducing uniform regulations for hunting and trapping throughout the park (memo from K. R. Daly, Solicitor, Dept. of the Interior, to O. S. Finnie, 28 April 1931; letter from J. A. McDougal to H. E. Hume, Chairman, Dominion Lands Board, Dept. of the Interior, 29 Aug. 1932; both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). In 1932, McDougal recommended that the Alberta Game Regulations should apply to the entire park, because most of its territory lay in Alberta, that the RCMP should collect fur royalties, and that there should be a fee of $2.00 for Métis and White permittees. He recommended that traders pay a $10.00 fee and added,

> I do not favour issuing tripping licenses to traders in the park, I am strongly in favour of all traders being obliged to have permanent trading posts in the park [letter from McDougal to Hume, 29 Aug. 1932, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870].

His opinion was supported by Dewey Soper's observations (Soper was a naturalist who was in the park from 1932 to 1934, conducting wildlife studies [Soper 1978]):

> It is my belief that transient trading in the southern area be prohibited and that all traders be required to establish permanent trading posts for the following reasons: -
>
> (a) It appears that the traders themselves, operating principally out of Chipewyan, would prefer to have such a regulation, whereby all would be on an equal footing so far as permanently established trading posts are concerned.
>
> (b) I am convinced that permanent trading posts in the southern area is preferable for the good of the Indians. The travelling trader, owing to difficulties of transport with small dog teams during the winter, is inclined to carry light-weight non-essentials, which the Indians are induced to purchase. Were the traders established in permanent posts where the Indians knew always when and where to find them, and transact business, more of the real essentials or life would be bartered for, to the benefit to the native. The Indians are only too ready to squander their income on trifles, if nothing else is at hand, but at an established post he can readily obtain for his furs such basic necessities as blankets, flour ammunition, etc. etc. [extract from letter from Mr. Soper to Mr. Hume, 13 Oct. 1932, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870; emphasis added].

Soper felt that $15.00 would be a reasonable price for a trader's licence, because the price of furs was low (ibid.).

Tripping was allowed under the Alberta game regulations, which applied to the park annex:

> Under the Alberta Regulations a man may acquire a fur buyers license and go anywhere he pleases to purchase furs. This is a practice which was found inadvisable in the Northwest Territories, and we have a regulation in force in the Territories under which traders must establish and maintain permanent trading posts, and cannot trade at any other place [extract from memo of Mr. Hume to Mr. Rowatt, 10 Nov. 1932, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870].

H. E. Hume, the Chairman of the Dominion Lands Board, suggested that the Northwest Territories regulation regarding trading should be extended to the park annex and the seven traders in the area (ibid.). This suggestion was adopted by the federal government, which decided that "...it is desirable, in the interests of effective administration, to have one set of game regulations applicable to the whole of the park" (P.C. 2589). On December 17, 1933, the park regulations were amended by Order-in-Council P.C. 2589, which provided that the NWT game regulations, which already governed hunting and trapping in the NWT section of the park (district A), would apply to the entire park.

The traders at Fort Chipewyan were unhappy with the new regulations. They wanted to be able to operate posts in new locations in order "...to offset the loss of tripping rights now enjoyed," and they did not really want to open permanent posts at all, "...as they never were obliged to do so in previous years." Fred Fraser's post at Hay River was one of the few which was open most of the year; for the other traders, such a requirement would mean a significant increase in expense (letter from J. A. McDougal to J. Lorne Turner, 12 March 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). Tripping continued in a few instances in the winter of 1933-34 (telegram from A. L. Cumming to J. A. McDougal, 14 Dec. 1933; letter from M. J. Dempsey to McDougal, 20 Dec. 1933; letter from Dempsey to McDougal, 5 March 1934; all in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870).

In March, 1934, McDougal wired the Chairman of the Dominion Lands Board for clarification of the new regulations, wanting to know whether or not traders who did not have permanent posts in the park could get trading permits (telegram from McDougal to Chairman, 1 March 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). Later the same month, Fred Fraser wrote to McDougal, requesting further clarification of the regulations (letter from Fraser to McDougal, 14 March 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). Clarification was provided by the Dominion Lands Board; the major points were that traders were obliged to establish outposts in locations "...deemed desirable from the standpoint of park administration" and from "...the interests of the natives whom they will serve...," that "outposts must be operated for a period of three months in each license year, not necessarily continuously," and that permits would be cancelled automatically if the outpost were not maintained, which would require the trader to make a new application with no guarantee of success. Also, it announced that only those traders who were trading in the annex on the date it was declared part of the park, September 24, 1926, would be eligible for permits (letter from J. Lorne Turner, Acting Chairman, Dominion Lands Board, to J. A. McDougal, 9 April 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). The length of time an outpost must be operated was changed from a three month to an eight month period (telegram from Turner to McDougal, 14 March 1934; letter from Turner to McDougal, 17 March 1934; both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870).

Trading Posts and Outposts

Several individuals immediately applied for licences to operate outposts in the park. Hamdon and Alley, whose permit to trade must have been reinstated, applied to establish an outpost at Hay River. As well, they requested permits for three local residents to work for them as employees: Jean Baptiste Tournangeau, who had traded for them in 1923; William Wylie, who had traded in 1924; and Alex Lepine, who had worked for them for several years (letter from Hamdon and Alley to J. A. McDougal, 26 March 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). The file contains a letter from their solicitors which suggests the impact of the fur trade of the early 1920s on the area south of the Peace River. Hamdon and Alley had first opened a trading post at Fort Chipewyan in 1920; in 1923 they opened several posts south of the Peace River, but they did not keep their post at Hay River

> ...as the fur had gone out from that corner of the park, though they continued to trade in Birch River, Deep Lake and other places.... The fur being now back at Hay River, many of our client's customers (trappers) are at that location, and have requested our clients to re-open their Post their [sic] [letter from Friedman, Lieberman and Newson, Solicitors, to J. McDougall (sic), 5 April 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870].

Another applicant was Albert Savard, who wanted

> ...a permit to establish a trading post on the west bank of Chenal Des Quatres Fourches four miles from Peace river I beg to report that at present there is not any trading post established within fifteen miles of the above named location, and the post would be a convenience for several families of Indians and halfbreeds who spend the winter months in the vicinity,

known as "The Big Rock" (letter from M. J. Dempsey to McDougal, 10 June 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). Savard supported his application by stating that he had resided in the park from January 1922 to May 1934, but it was turned down on the grounds that he was not actually trading in the park on September 24, 1926 (application by Albert Savard to trade and traffic in game in WBP, 31 May 1934; letter from J. A. McDougal to Savard, 16 July 1934; both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). An application from C. M. Largent was turned down for the same reason (letter from Largent to McDougal, 21 July 1934; letter from J. Lorne Turner to McDougal, 16 Aug. 1934; both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870). The park administration appears to have strictly interpreted its eligibility requirement, though it was not necessarily in the interests of the Natives trapping in the park.

To a certain extent, the traders had already divided up the park trappers among them, by locating their outposts in different regions so as to avoid a lot of direct competition with one another and by making on-going credit arrangements with particular families (Hamdon 1978). Table 2 lists the trading posts and outposts in the park from 1929 to 1936. In the earlier period, posts were located at every major trapping area, although these were usually only caches and cabins used by trippers and were not permanently occupied. On March 1, 1934, the only trader permanently based in the park was Reed, at Embarras Portage. All the other traders were based in Fort Chipewyan. The number of outposts declined between 1931 and 1933, probably reflecting the economic difficulties which the traders faced selling fur and the fact that they could still operate from Fort Chipewyan. By 1934, the number of posts had increased, but they were now concentrated in the Peace-Athabasca delta, which was the prime muskrat hunting area,[13] and they were no longer found at either Birch River or in the Jackfish River/Big Slough area on the Peace. This clustering of posts and outposts probably reflected the relative ease of outfitting the posts from Fort Chipewyan, and they were still closer to the more distant trappers than was the town itself. In 1936, there were five trading posts and three outposts located in the park.

The new regulations governing the fur trade forced traders to maintain regular posts and outposts on an annual basis, usually for the entire winter period, when the Native people were resident in their log cabin settlements. To profit from this situation, the traders needed to increase their volume of trade, presumably by stocking desirable trade goods, including the "necessities" referred to by Soper. While competition might have prevented the traders from unduly increasing the amounts they charged for goods, the Native trappers were largely a "captive" market. One informant now thinks that the trappers, who trusted to the

Table 2

Trading Posts and Outposts in Wood Buffalo Park, 1929 to 1936

1929 Jackfish River - HBC
Birch River - HBC, Hamdon and Alley
Hay River - HBC, Fred Fraser
Baril (Deep) Lake/River - Hamdon and Alley, Thomas Woodman
Embarras Portage/River - Elwin B. Reed
Alberta - Albert Savard (located just outside the southeast corner of the park)
Tripper - Colin Fraser (based in Fort Chipewyan)

(letter from John A. McDougal to the Director, 26 Feb. 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A)

1931 Jackfish River - HBC (not operated since 1928-29)
Big Slough - Jean Boisvert, Hamdon and Alley (not operated since 1926)
Birch River - HBC, Hamdon and Alley
Hay River - HBC, Fred Fraser
Baril Lake - HBC, Hamdon and Alley, Thomas Woodman (HBC and Hamdon and Alley's posts not in operation except as tripping caches since 1925; permits of Hamdon and Alley cancelled in 1931)
Embarras River - E. Reed
Alberta - Albert Savard

(map showing location of trading posts in WBP in 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A)

1933 Hay River - HBC (operated from Fort Chipewyan, with employees from Fort Chipewyan making periodic trips to the post), Fred Fraser
Embarras River - E. Reed (also a post office)
Revillon Coupé - Colin Fraser (outpost)
Trippers - William Workman (brother to Thomas?), Roderick Fraser

(map showing trading posts; letter from M. J. Dempsey, Park Warden, to J. A. McDougal, 20 Dec. 1933, both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870)

1934 Hay River - HBC (J. J. Loutit), Fred Fraser, Hamdon and Alley

Baril Lake - Hamdon and Alley (outpost), Mrs. A. Woodman

Egg Lake - Hamdon and Alley (outpost)

Revillon Coupé - Colin Fraser

Embarras River - E. Reed

(memo from Justin? L. Cumming, Acting District Agent, to J. Lorne Turner, Director, Lands, NWT&Yukon Branch, 3 Dec. 1934; map showing approximate locations of trading and outposts in WBP winter 1935-36; both in PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870)

1935-36 Hay River - HBC, Fred Fraser (?)

Baril Lake - Hamdon and Alley (trading post), Fred Fraser

Egg Lake - Hamdon and Alley (outpost), Mrs. A. Woodman

Gull River - Hamdon and Alley (outpost)

Frog Lake - HBC

Frog Creek - Fred Fraser (outpost)

Embarras River - E. Reed (?)

(memo from J. Lorne Turner to J. M. Wardle, Dep. Minister, Dept. of the Interior, 8 Jan. 1936, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870) traders' fairness, "...were always getting robbed" (field journal 1977 V:81).

The posts and outposts were located near Native residence, especially Cree settlements. Also, Native families tended to congregate in the vicinity of a store. The Hay River store was strategically located to intercept the trappers from Birch River, Lake Claire, and Peace River who passed on their way to Fort Chipewyan (field journal 1977 V:81). In this way, Native trappers were drawn into a closer relationship with the traders. They were almost certainly encouraged to increase fur production (see below) and to rely on more manufactures and store foods than previously, when Soper suggested they traded for "trifles." These trading posts may be viewed as the bush equivalent of the corner grocery store, with the convenience and expense such stores mean for shoppers. Some of the smaller posts closed between 1936 and 1940, and the remainder, except for the post at Embarras, closed shortly after the war (see discussion below; J. Parker, per. commun. 1981). The Natives who were resident in the bush found themselves greatly inconvenienced. These closings were one cause of the relocation of some of the bush settlements and the regrouping of some local bands, a topic which will be discussed later.

Permits and Access to the Park

The development of restricted trading regulations and of uniform hunting and trapping regulations was paralleled by more precise rulings about access to the park and the granting of permits. Fur bearers and game were relatively plentiful in the park in the early 1930s, especially when compared to the rest of Alberta, and many trappers wanted to gain access:

> Owing to the supervision of the wardn [sic] service game has increased in the Wood Buffalo Park to a noticable [sic] extent in comparison with the areas surrounding the Park, especially Beaver and Moose, and naturally all traety [sic] indians who have not permits to trap in the park are very anxious to secue [sic] the privelege [sic] [letter from M. J. Dempsey, Park Warden, to J. Milner, Acting District Agent, 1 March 1933, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2].

A letter written in 1937 explained the problem perceived by the park administration:

> It is very difficult to get some of the indians to understand the regulations governing the issue of permits to hunt and trap in the park.
>
> They seem to have the fixed idea that if at any time during their life they have made a hunting or trapping trip in what is now the park that they are eligible for a permit.
>
> Indians are nomadic in trapping and it is very probable that close investigations would disclose that eighty per cent of the middle aged indians from Fort McMurray to Hay River N.W.T. have at some time in their life hunted and trapped in the area which is now the Wood Buffalo Park [letter from M. J. Dempsey to M. Meikle, Agent and Supt. WBP, 20 Feb. 1937, PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1].

The park administration had decided in 1926 that only persons who had lived in the park when it was created would be eligible for permits. This rule may have been interpreted generously in the immediate post-1926 period. However, in the early 1930s, the threat posed by large numbers of outside trappers who might be eligible for entry resulted in strict interpretations.

A test application was made by Jonas Laviolette, the chief of the Chipewyan band. He had applied in 1928 to trap in the annex and had been refused, presumably because his name did not appear on a list of treaty Indians eligible for park permits prepared for the park by the Department of Indian Affairs. He applied again in December, 1932, and Park Warden Dempsey expressed his fears:

> There is no doubt that at Richadson [sic] Lake [known locally as Jackfish Lake] where Jonas Lavoilette [sic] lives there are a large number of treaty indians who are in the same position as Mr. Laviolette as to having at some time trapped or hunted in the area which is now the park, whose applications would follow closely upon the granting of a permit to Jonas Laviolette [letter from M. J. Dempsey to J. Milner, 1 March 1933, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2].

Chief Laviolette's application was denied, but he was granted a permit to enter the park to visit members of his band (ibid.; letter from Jos. Milner, Acting District Agent, to Father J. L. Coudert, 5 April 1933, Archives of the Bishop). The power of the park officials to prevent free and easy travel and visiting was a source of division within the Chipewyan band.

Park files contain correspondence with other trappers who tried to demonstrate their eligibility for park permits by supplying evidence showing that they had hunted in the park in earlier years. The park administration then announced a firm policy about access on October 30, 1935. Applicants would have to establish that they were "bona fide residents of the Park area," and that they were "...dependent on the game supply of the Wood Buffalo Park for their livelihood" (letter from J. Lorne Turner, Director, to P. E. Trudel, 7 April 1936; cf. telegram from Turner to Trudel, 6 April 1936; both in PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1). Turner clarified this ruling in a letter to one persistent applicant who had tripped in the area as recently as 1923, explaining that only those "actually in residence" at the time the park was created in 1926 would be considered for permits. Such occupation defined a bona fide resident (letter from J. Lorne Turner to Elmer Ellison, 23 July 1936; telegram from P. E. Trudel to Turner, 4 April 1936; both in PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1). Several applicants were denied permits on one or both grounds.[14]

One applicant, whom Dempsey considered a special case, though technically ineligible, was Jonas Tourangeau, who was born and raised at Lake Mamawi and whose parents had a house at Dog Camp. He had two brothers with park permits. He himself, however, had not lived in the park since 1921 (letter from M. Dempsey to Trudel, 22 July 1936; letter from Trudel to Tourangeau, 19 Aug. 1936; both in PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1). At the time of his application he was 69 years old, the eldest of the three brothers (AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.). He hoped to rejoin his kinsmen, especially as the bush life became more difficult for him.

Another example is an application by Joseph Takaro, born in the park area. He stated,

> My father died when I was small and I have been living with my Mother at Jackfish Lake and Trapping around Grey Wavey Creek. There are so many trappers around there now that I would like to obtain my rights to trap on the Wood Buffalo Park. My brother Pedlic (Fred Tuckeroo) lives at Egg Lake...[Application by Joseph Tuckeroo, PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1].

Denying him a permit prevented him from moving into a traditional band structure with his (older) brother.

Fred or Pedlic Takaro was one reference for another applicant, his sister's son, Isadore Voyageur, who wrote,

> I was a small child when my parents died and I have lived at Jackfish Lake with different people. Fur is scarce over there and I am now old enough to look after myself [application by Isadore Voyageur for hunting/trapping permit area C, PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1].

His other reference was another kinsman. As with Joseph Takaro, Isadore Voyageur was prevented from rejoining relatives in the park. Conversely, the enforcement of this access restriction meant that Indians in the park were denied the right to call some individuals members of their local bands.

A man could not become eligible for a park permit through marriage, although marriage was a traditional means of establishing a tie with the spouse's band. In one case, a ruling was made that

> ...the fact that he married a person who lived in the Park does not qualify him for a permit to trap therein [letter from A. L. Cumming to Mrs. Catherin Boucher née Ratfat, 20 Aug. 1936, PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1].

The wife would therefore have had to leave the park in order to live with her husband. As a result, women in the park may have been reluctant to marry men without permits, and such men would not have been preferred sons-in-law, because they could not contribute food or money to the household of the wife's parents. This measure may have severed the usual marriage universe of the Chipewyan band, and it may have contributed to closer ties between Crees and Chiepwyans in the park. Further genealogical study is needed to verify this suggestion.

There were other "young men" over eighteen years of age who had been hunting and trapping outside the park for a few years (possibly doing bride service) whose applications for permits were refused on the following grounds:

> As...the young men now applying for permits have made their living outside the park for some years it would seem that they are not dependent upon the game supply for their livelihood and they have forfeited any rights they may have had to permits [letter from R. A. Gibson, Director, to M. Meikle, Agent and Supt. WBP, 21 May 1937; cf. letter from Meikle to Gibson, 15 April 1937, both in PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A].

This may have forced young men to reconsider their marriage strategies, either restricting their marriage choices to park women or abandoning bride service.

The park officials decided in 1935 to grant permits to the sons of permittees in their own names at age eighteen; that is, to those young men who had continued to live and trap in the park with their fathers. This change did not require legislative amendment and took the form of an instruction from J. Lorne Turner (telegram from J. Lorne Turner to A. L. Cumming, 6 Feb. 1935; letter from Turner to Cumming, 11 Feb. 1935, both in PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2; memo from D. H. Hogan to R. A. Gibson, 23 Aug. 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A).

In total, 107 persons were added to the list of park permits in the 1930s, mainly men, but a few widows too. Twelve of these permits went to non-Natives, three of whom were Mission personnel. While many of these additions undoubtedly represent older sons, some of them are puzzling and suggest some flexibility in the granting of permits, even after the permit system was tightened in 1935 (Additions to G. H. L. List, after 1926/27 to 1948/49, Park files, WBNP). However, the permit system meant that the Native population inside the park was closed, unless men or women left the park or wives entered the park.

The applications for permits and related correspondence suggest that Native families wanted the same freedom to define their own social groups which they had enjoyed in the past. This involved periodic regrouping along kinship lines, especially units of father-son(s), brothers or sisters and their spouses, and other close kin. The strict park regulations limited these possibilities. Even visiting was difficult, since persons without hunting and trapping permits had to obtain special permits to enter the park for a visit. How easy these were to obtain is not clear;it seems that chiefs on official band business may have had access to them, but the park administration undoubtedly frowned on granting many such permits. It may have feared, and probably with reason, that once in the park, visitors would hunt, trap, and possibly prove difficult to evict.

There is an indication that Natives attempted to subvert these regulations which restricted their interaction and movement. Indians in the park may have cooperated with kinsmen and friends outside the park in marketing beaver trapped illegally in Alberta, but legally in the park after 1932 (letter from S. H. Clark, Game Comm., to J. Lorne Turner, 18 March 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2). Indians without permits continued to enter the park to hunt. For example, Indians were reported entering the park from the Birch Mountains, but "...the indians would not commit themselves to give evidence" (letter from M. J. Dempsey to M. Meikle, 20 Feb. 1937, PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1).

By 1940, this situation changed. One memo claimed,

> The Park permittees are a help to the wardens as they are jealous of their trapping rights in the Park and in order to protect them they inform the wardens of any non-permittee who is attempting to trap in the park [memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 28 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Cumming agreed, writing that

> They [Indians] value this privilege [to hunt and trap in the park] very highly and are unanimous against any change in the regulations which will permit those who are not qualified to trap in the Wood Buffalo Park [memo from A. L. Cumming to Mr. Gibson, 29 Nov. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Earlier in the same year, however, the Acting Superintendent of the park had written to the wardens,

> It is quite apparent that from time to time families who are eligible for and hold Park permits take in with them certain outsiders and it must be made perfectly clear that only the immediate members of a Park permittee's family are entitled to accompany them on their journeys in the Park [letter from J. A. Urquhart to Wardens, 23 Feb. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

The variation in points of view may reflect individual Native differences, especially in a period of reduced fur populations, as well as a desire by park officials to believe that Indians cooperated with them out of appreciation for their conservation efforts rather than out of fear of negative sanctions.

Internal Restrictions

There were further restrictions on trappers within the park over access to the three zones or districts of the park, which were a source of some on-going but low-key conflict among park trappers. Districts A and B in the old park were restricted to treaty Indians only, but district C, south of the Peace River, was open not only to Métis and Whites, but also to many individuals from A and B. Table 3 shows the number of trappers in each district and the number who could enter another district; the number of trappers with access to district C could nearly double. Park Warden Dempsey wrote in 1935 that many Indians from the old park were entering district C for the muskrat trapping or "ratting" season, "...which caused some trouble..." (letter from M. J. Dempsey to A. L. Cumming, 12 Aug. 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A).

> Now this summer the permittees in the Chipewyan district have been urging that those Indians who live at Fox Lake should be prohibited from coming into the Chipewyan district to hunt regardless of whether they have a 'C' permit [ibid.].

The Indians in the old park were worried that they might be prevented from trapping in the prime muskrat country south of the Peace River. However, the Indians in the annex were reluctant to have more restrictions on access imposed. Cumming had asked a group of Indians from the Fort Chipewyan bands if they wanted to see district C closed "...to everyone who had not trapped in that area since 1926 except the sons of permittees upon reaching the age of 18 now assisting their people in the Park" (letter from A. L. Cumming to J. Lorne Turner, 13 Aug. 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A). Only one man agreed; the rest refused.

Table 3

Park Districts and Average Trapping Density

District	Established	Area (Mi^2)		Number of Trappers 1939-40		Average Area Per Trapper (Mi^2)
		Alberta	NWT	Free	Paid	
A	Dec. 18, 1922 P.C. 2498		3,625	100[a]	nil	36.25
B	Dec. 18, 1922 P.C. 2498	6,875		88[b]	3[c]	77.55
C	Sept. 24, 1926 P.C. 1444	6,800		83	61	47.22
Totals		13,675	3,625	271	64	51.34
Grand Totals		17,300		335[d]		51.34

a - 34 of these are also licenced to trap in district B
b - 74 of these are also licenced to trap in district C
c - 2 of these are also licenced to trap in district C
d - "Approximately 200 of these are heads of families and as such entitled to permits to each take 15 beaver"

(Adapted from "Statement on Trapping Conditions in Wood Buffalo Park," memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 28 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3)

At the same time, the park administration debated the merits of introducing a greatly restricted trapline system. This possibility was rejected on the grounds that

> ...the marriage of the children of the families would involve further interpretation of hunting and trapping rights since it is not practicable to restrict their hunting operations to the areas controlled by their parents [memo from J. Lorne Turner to R. A. Gibson, 14 Jan. 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2].

These internal difficulties continued through the early 1940s, because the regulatory steps taken in the 1930s did not satisfactorily resolve the problems in the park. In fact, by 1935 the park regulations were seen as inadequate and in need of revision, which was not complete until 1949 (memo from D. H. Hogan to R. A. Gibson, 23 Aug. 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A). Meanwhile, changes were piece-meal, though not insignificant.

Indian Resistance

The Indian response to these developments in the park was one of apprehension, resentment, and resistance. Delegations of chiefs and subchiefs met with Austin L. Cumming, District Agent and Park Superintendent, in 1935. The Fort Chipewyan bands were represented by Cree chief Pierre Whitehead, a "second chief" Tomas (Thomas) Gibot, and Isidore Simpson, a "headman" for the Chipewyan band. Cumming reported,

> They had decided to come...as they had heard that many changes were being made in the Park Regulations. They had also heard that the Park was to be made a closed reserve.
>
> They also stated that the Park was getting over crowded.
>
> I assured them that there were no drastic changes in the Wood Buffalo Park regulations and the Park was not likely to be turned into a Game Reserve [letter from A. L. Cumming to J. Lorne Turner, 13 Aug. 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A].

A report filed by Harold Halcrow in 1940 indicates that these assurances were not believed and may not have allayed the fears of the trappers. Halcrow had been investigating the possibility of muskrat conservation in the park (see below), and he was not optimistic about making any progress as long as the Indians were so concerned over their future in the park:

> As I see it, before any start can be made, in an educational campaign, the Crees living in the Park must be given a Reserve. I understand they have repeatedly asked for this and they have frankly told me that the reason that they cannot get their Reserve, in their old hunting grounds, namely in the Park, is because in some future date the Government intends clearing them out of the area. It would be most difficult, and almost impossible, for anyone to bring them into line unless the Government showed their good faith by giving them their Reserve at a place where they want to locate, that is, on higher ground. At the present time the majority of these people are located in small houses, on the marshes and low ground, where it is most unhealthy for anyone to live, and they tell me they can't build anything permanent due to the fact that they don't know how long they will be allowed to stay in the Park [letter from H. Halcrow, The Pas, to T. A. Crerar, Min. of Mines and Resources, 26 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Obviously, Indian anxiety in the 1930s was similar to that of the 1920s.

Indians may have interpreted the park decision to issue permits for cabin building as another indicator of their losing control to park officials. For example, in 1933 one trapper had to request permission to build a trapping cabin (letter from M. J. Dempsey to J. Milner, 1 March 1933, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2), and in 1935 a memo was issued advising that there was no objection to trappers erecting cabins "...providing the sites chosen are approved by the Park Superintendent" (memo from D. H. Hogan to R. A. Gibson, 19 Aug. 1935, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A).

Indian protest against park regulations were rarely as direct as the 1935 meeting mentioned above. They took two forms: one was the continued violation of hunting and trapping regulations, and the other was refusal to cooperate with wardens. As an example of the former, bison were still killed occasionally, as in 1930, when five bison were killed in the old park, resulting in the cancellation of a park permit (telegram from John A. McDougal to O. S. Finnie, 26 March 1930, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). In 1931, Indians were accused of shooting moose and bear out of season (telegram from McDougal to Finnie, 22 Aug. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). That same year, Cree chief Pierre Whitehead set muskrat traps illegally, though the correspondence noted that he had been authorized to do so by RCMP Sergeant Bryant "...on account of destitution." The pelts he trapped were not sold, but delivered to the RCMP (letter from M. J. Dempsey to J. A. McDougal, 4 Feb. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). 1931 was also the year in which the large number of beaver were taken illegally (killed after open water) and sold to Hamdon and Alley and to Woodman. The correspondence adds,

> They [Indians] arrived at Fort Chipewyan during the early morning after having crossed lake Mamawi during the night to avoid being searched by Park Wardens [letter from M. J. Dempsey to John A. McDougal, 14 Aug. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9358].

Dempsey wrote about efforts by the wardens to supervise trappers and prevent such violations: Warden F. C. Dent, in the Birch River district,

> ...kept a close check on the trappers all winter which caused the sub-chief of that district to complain that his constant patrol of trap lines was interfering with trapping operations [ibid.],

as indeed it may have been. As late as 1937, one trapper was charged with the illegal use of snares, which were legally sold by the traders (letter from R. A. Allan to M. J. Dempsey, 28 Dec. 1937, PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9357). Trappers would have to abandon such practices when the wardens were expected. McDougal referred in one letter to the wardens' searches of Indians and their belongings to prevent beaver poaching; the Indians were unhappy about being searched, and one party refused to allow it (letter from J. A. McDougal to O. S. Finnie, 13 June 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). In 1936, Dempsey commented that

> Warden Routh has had to be very patient and tactful as the Indians appear to bitterly resent any supervision of their trapping and hunting methods as unwarranted interference [extract from M. J. Dempsey's report, 17 March 1936, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A].

The list of charges and convictions for the 1930s lists 30 or fewer individuals charged, and many of these were the 1931 charges for illegal hunting of beaver. it appears from this that people did not cease hunting and trapping illegally, but rather that they became more discrete in their hunting regulation violations. For example, in 1940 the wardens were convinced that the Indians were killing "swimming" beaver after spring thaw rather than "...exerting themselves [to trap] during the open season..." (before thaw): "Families camp at mouths of creeks emptying into Slave and Peace river for the purpose of catching fish for food for themselves and dogs...," and it was easy for them to shoot beaver at that time (letter from M. J. Dempsey to J. A. Urquhart, 28 May 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). They would use these beaver to fill their permits, and they were able to outwit the wardens by being alerted to their presence by the camp dogs and by not handing in their beaver permits. As Dempsey put it, "...we have been chasing them around begging for the permits and being put off with excuses untill [sic] they feel that there is no danger in playing tag with us" (ibid.). What some wardens saw as a friendly competition was a serious business to the Indians, whose livelihood depended on supplies of meat and fur. As late as 1940, some were resisting searches. Warden Dent, noticing three Indians passing his camp,

> ...was curious of their destination and waived [sic] to them to come in to shore so that he could check up on them. They refused to do so and Dent arranged in Fort Chipewyan for their arrest and trial. The result was that they were fined $15.00 for not complying with the orders of the warden [memo from M. Meikle to Mr. Cumming, 28 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Indians were in a difficult situation. On the one hand, they must have felt that they needed to produce more meat or fur than they were allowed. This was especially true toward the end of the decade when fur was often in short supply. Yet, to be caught meant risking being excluded from the park, temporily or permanently. Such expulsions resulted in serious hardship on the trapper and his family. In one instance, a man who had trapped 41 muskrats illegally after a warning that to do so would lead to the cancellation of his permit had his permit suspended for a year (letter from J. A. McDougal to Joseph Fortin, n.d.; letter from M. J. Dempsey to M. Meikle, 26 March 1938; letter from Dempsey to Meikle, 22 June 1938; all in PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9358). The following year, Isidore Simpson, the Chipewyan councillor, wrote to ask if the man could get his permit back:

> As you know he was expelled, for an infringement of the Park laws, but I think he has now been sufficiently punished, and know [sic] that if he regains his rights to trap and hunt in the Park again, he will never do anything that may get him into trouble with the Park authorities.
>
> He finds it very hard not to be able to get to his old trapping grounds, and this last season in Alberta, he has made hardly any hunt, and is very poor and miserable. ...
>
> He has promised me, that he will never do anything - break any laws that may get him into trouble, but will adhere to all the rules and regulations, so I hope Sir, that you will see your way clear to grant this request [letter from Isadore

> Simpson to Mr. Meikle, 12 July 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9358].

In fact, this trapper had killed beaver illegally in 1931 and would be convicted in 1942 of illegally possessing marten (various correspondence, PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9358). His case and that of others suggest that park trappers took calculated risks and were sometimes caught. As an indication of the severity of the Indians' situation when fur was scarce, in 1939 both the Cree and the Chipewyan bands took treaty at Fort Chipewyan while making strong protest about game regulations and the migratory birds act (Provincial Archives of Alberta [PAA] Head 1939). Indians continued to believe that they had a treaty right to hunt and trap freely which could not be abridged by government officials unilaterally.

It is true that the restriction on the number of trappers in the park combined with park administration conservation measures to increase animal populations, individual fur yields, and incomes for those with access to the park. Park officials believed that the Indians saw the value of the regulations and cooperated with them. As one agent stated,

> This park is now one of the best hunting grounds in northern Alberta, because it has been administered under conservation methods, our efforts being assisted by those who are benefiting [memo from Director of Dept. of Mines and Resources to Cumming, 28 oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Halcrow presented a contrary view, that "...in the great majority of cases they were giving no co-operation to the administration of the Park..." and were hostile to the regulations, believing some of them to encourage muskrat destruction rather than conservation (letter from Halcrow to Crerar, 26 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). Native trappers did not participate in the framing of regulations, in spite of their intimate acquaintance with the habits of the animals and the lack of expertise about game management of park staff (cf. Soper 1978). The data indicates that Indian "cooperation" was often coerced by threats of fines and evictions.

The Warden Service

It was the park wardens who were the immediate agents of supervision of Native trapping and hunting activities. The park was divided into six warden districts (see fig. 5), each one containing a main cabin which was the warden's base of operations, and other cabins with provisions located at "strategic" locations, which allowed the wardens to patrol their districts. The task of each warden was to protect the bison and to enforce park hunting and trapping regulations. They performed a variety of other jobs: they distributed trappers' permits at the beginning of each season and collected them at the end; they stamped beaver and did other similar administrative tasks; they fought forest fires; they killed bison in the fall hunts; they put up fish for dog food; they did the local building and repairing of their district cabins (Allan 1978; Soper 1978; letter from M. J. Dempsey to Warden John Routh, 12 Aug. 1935, PAC RG 85). Wardens did not administer welfare, which was the responsibility of the Indian Agent, the mission, or the RCMP. They were paid salaries ranging from a high of $1,740 per annum with no rations for a (chief) "park warden," to $1,020-900 plus rations for "game wardens," to $780-540 plus rations for regular wardens, who were classified as laborers. Rations were valued at about $365 per year. The park found it possible to keep men at the low end of the salary range, which worked out to $45 per month, only because of "...the stress of present economic conditions..." (memo from J. Lorne Turner to R. A. Gibson, 21 Nov. 1934, PAC RG 85).

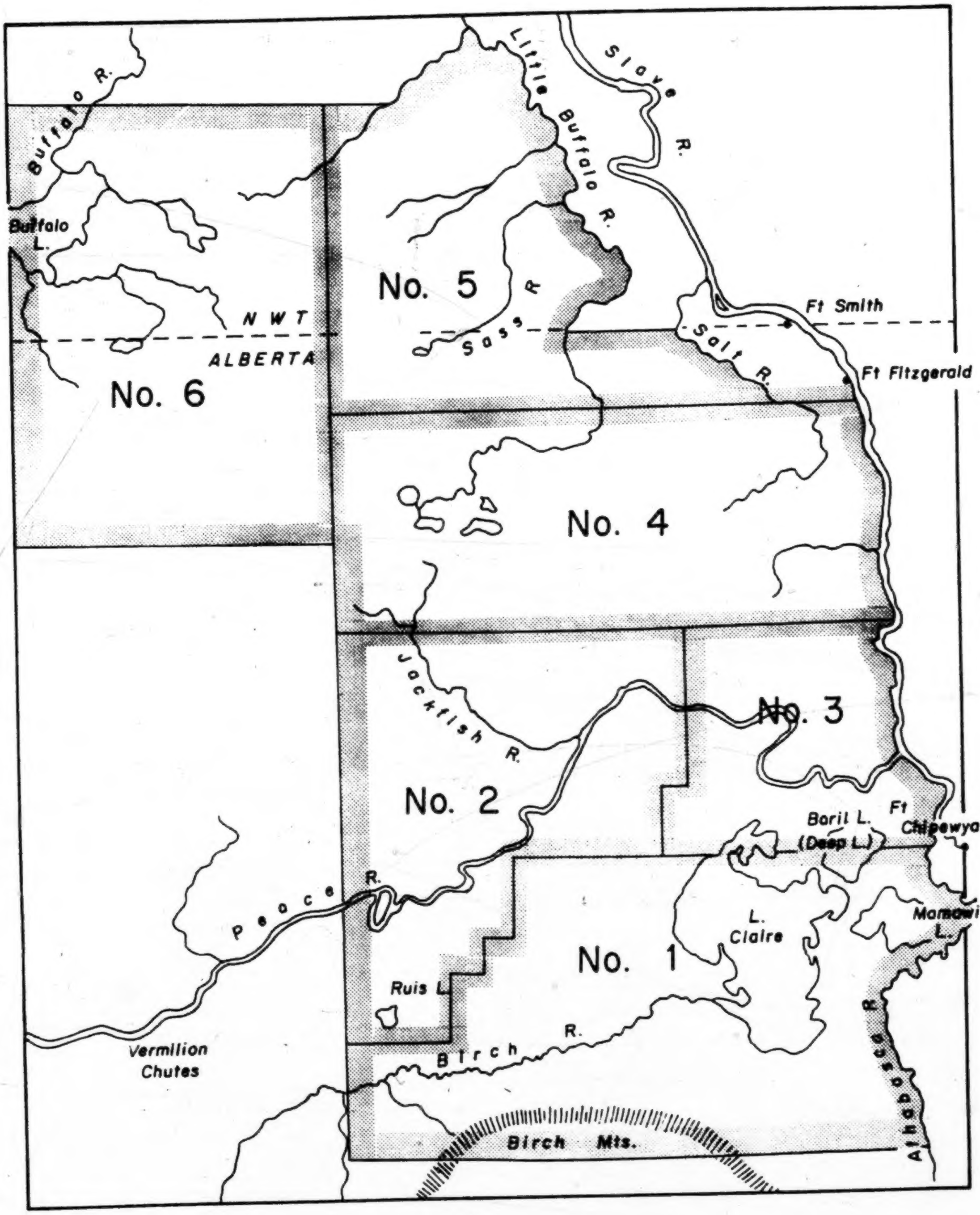
Buffalo R.
Little Buffalo R.
Slave R.
Buffalo L.
No. 5
Sass R.
NWT
ALBERTA
Ft Smith
Salt R.
Ft Fitzgerald
No. 6
No. 4
Jackfish R.
No. 3
No. 2
Baril L.
(Deep L.)
Ft Chipewyan
Peace R.
L. Claire
Mamawi L.
No. 1
Ruis L.
Birch R.
Vermilion Chutes
Birch Mts.
Athabasca R.

Figure 5

Administrative Districts 1935-36, Wood Buffalo Park

[Adapted from Mathewson 1974:4; original map supplied by R. Allan]

Low salaries might have seemed desirable to park residents, who had few job choices other than trapping and some occasional employment as laborers. Trappers in the park had an income which was below the lowest wardens' salary (see discussion below). However, when two positions became available they were offered to men from outside the region, in spite of the apparently strong applications from four local men (not permittees) (cf. correspondence PAC RG 85 v. 667 file 4031 p. 3). It may seem odd that outsiders were selected, when local people knew the area well and might have had an interest in seeing the local resources conserved. Moreover, Indians were never considered for such positions, and Métis almost as seldom. James Parker and Ken Tingley discuss the history of job discrimination against Natives in northern Alberta. They note that R. A. Gibson suggested that Natives be hired to work in Wood Buffalo Park. Superintendent Meikle rejected the idea on the following grounds:

> "Today I discussed with Father Mansoz of the Roman Catholic Mission here [Fort Smith], the possibilities of using natives from the Mission school. He gave me his opinion gained from years of experience in the north, of the natives habits and manner of living of the Indians and he does not think an Indian would be dependable, or would remain any length of time on a steady job. They have no bright suitable Indian at present but occasionally they get one who might do work in the Wood Buffalo Park. However, such a one would not be content to remain long under such restrictions as would be necessary if he were to be a park warden. His natural desire to kill and trap and wander about would be too strong an influence and he would likely depart quickly without any warning. Father Mansoz has a very extensive knowledge of the natives and I think his opinions are very good. I do not think that Indians can be used satisfactorily in positions of responsibility such as that of janitor or park warden. An experiment might be made in using one as an apprentice under a good park warden, but more probably, after a years [sic] service he would quit and go to live in his natural manner. If such an experiment were made it could only result in him becoming an assistant, as he could not be trusted to enforce the Game Laws and to attend to the duties that a warden has to do. In this connection I would like to say that our wardens who are white

> men are much superior in the enforcement of the regulations than our half-breed wardens, and for that reason we should keep a fair percentage of white wardens. The half-breeds are good dog team drivers, boat men and bush men but lack the strength of mind that a white man normally would have" [Parker and Tingley 1980:109-110].

In other words, Indians and Métis were without opportunity. Because they tended to be restricted to jobs such as fire fighting and laboring, their employment in the park was intermittant and poorly paid. Park employment could only supplement, not supplant, trapping as a source of income for park residents.

Equally important, the wardens, who had positions of authority and power over Natives, were primarily not Natives, even though many of their wives were Indian or Métis (cf. Soper 1978). Dewey Soper believed that the wardens generally had a good relationship with the Indians in the early 1930s (Soper 1978), while former warden Bob Allan talked of a friendly rivalry between the wardens and trappers. He once asked a man,

> You people must have got pretty mad at me, going on your trapline like that. "Oh no, we didn't mind," he says. "It's lot of fun too trying to fool you" [Allan 1978].

In fact, the data suggest that while individual relations were occasionally good, for the most part the warden's supervision was bitterly resented. Wardens were seen as interfering with the Indians' freedom to use the land and its resources as they needed, guaranteed in the unwritten clauses of Treaty 8.

White Trappers

Indians in the park had to contend with White trappers as well as with wardens. Bob Allan remembered that the White trappers in the park in the 1930s "...were worse than the Indians" because they were trapping for money (1978). Some of them created real difficulties for the Indians. One trapper in particular, a man named G. S. Savage in the Ruis Lake area, claimed the area as his private trapping preserve and threatened Indians and wardens alike. Dempsey reported that

> ...while he makes it appear that all he is asking for is a square deal and co-operation of the wardens, we know that what he actually wants is for us to scare the indians away from area that they have used all their lives and which was also used by their ancestors.
>
> While Mr Savage is accusing the wardens of encouraging the indians to encroach on his trapping grounds he fails to mention that when he came as a perfect stranger to his present location he did not consult the indians as to any priority of rights on that special trapping area.
>
> One indian in particular Pierre Tallcree told us that he had a well established trap line which took in Ruis Lake which he had been using for many years until Mr Savage drove him off in 1926. ...
>
> The indians are satisfied with a living, but Mr Savage makes it quite clear, that he wishes to make big money...[letter from M. J. Dempsey to P. E. Trudel, 5 Aug. 1937, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7869 pt. 1].

Savage ran a farm in the summer (at Fort Vermilion), as did many other outside trappers. He wanted to use poison on his line, which Dempsey was quick to refuse, feeling that it would create "...an embarrassing precedent..." (ibid.). He may have used it without permission; it was common practice for White trappers to do so, and Savage did not seem to feel bound by park regulations. Despite clear evidence that he was threatening Indians, the park was slow to cancel his permit, even though the wardens considered him a threat. According to Allan, they had to wait until he had been convicted of an offense (1978), which did not occur until the 1941-42 season (various correspondence PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7869 pt. 2). Even then, he continued trapping in the park, because he believed that he had been unjustly treated. Savage's history in the park represents an extreme example of the problems which

White trappers could create for Indians. The real threat which most White trappers represented was more indirect than physical abuse: as before, they produced disproportionate amounts of fur. This factor would become especially important after fur declined in quantity in the late 1930s.

Animal Populations

Fur and game animal populations in the park were generally large in the early 1930s (Soper 1945:48), though this situation was due less to any specific park conservation measure than to the fact that restricted access to the park had resulted in fewer trappers. Beaver, which had been closed in 1922, regained sufficient strength to be re-opened in 1932, with a quota of fifteen beaver per year for each trapper (*ibid.*:42). Soper noted that initially other furs were so plentiful that trappers did not use up their beaver quotas until after 1934. The fox population peaked in 1933, with some trappers taking 75 to 100 or more pelts in one season (Soper 1942:130; 1945:53). Muskrat, mink, lynx, and coyote were common, otter was fairly good, and there was some marten. Red squirrel was common but largely untouched (Soper 1945:51-55). Many of these species reflected the large hare population, which peaked in 1932-33 (*ibid.*:140). The only rare species were fisher and wolverine (*ibid.*:49). Fur bearers were not distributed evenly, however. Muskrat were most numerous in the Peace-Athabasca delta south of the Peace River, to the extent that

> During an average season about twice the number of pelts are taken in this restricted sector than in all the rest of the park put together. On good authority, it appears that during a peak year between 70,000 and 90,000 muskrat skins are traded at Chipewyan alone; the majority of these are derived from the Peace-Athabasca Delta [Soper 1942:138].

Most other fur bearers were more scarce along the eastern edge of the park. Soper reasonably concluded,

> This may possibly be explained on the grounds that more people and greater activity exist on the eastern side where intensive trapping has been carried on for a much longer period [_ibid_.:132-3].

Therefore, trappers congregated in the delta for the spring muskrat season, and if they wanted marten or other fine fur, they would move farther to the west. This is evidence why trappers resisted efforts to force them to remain in one trapping area.

Table 4 shows the total game and fur yield for the park for the 1934-35 season and contrasts it with the yield a decade later. Fur values were high, though they varied considerably. In the spring of 1933, muskrats were worth 25¢, and by the spring of 1934 they were worth 75¢ (Karras 1975:41,58). Karras remembered that a total of 250 rat skins was considered then to be "...a very successful season..." in northern Saskatchewan (_ibid_.:58). By his standards, the trappers in the park delta were well off. In 1933, $40,000 worth of fur was trapped in the Alberta section of the park (memo from ? to H. H. Rowatt, 14 Nov. 1933, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2).

After 1934 there was "...a slump in the aggregate numbers of many other fur-bearers" (Soper 1945:42), due to normal biological cycling and to drought. Overhunting, especially of beaver, was also a factor, because beaver play an important role in the maintenance of water levels. The decline in numbers of fur bearers placed considerably more pressure on beaver as a source of fur. In the winter of 1939-40, trappers took more than double the number of beaver they had trapped in the winter of 1934-35, even with a reduced quota (Soper 1945:42)(only heads of families were given a permit to take the quota of fifteen beaver).

Table 4

Total Game and Fur Yield for Wood Buffalo Park, 1934-35 and 1944-45

Species	Moose	Caribou	Deer	Otter	Beaver	Marten
1934-35	366	644	0	57	1015	112
1944-45	214	35	5	53	200	0
Increase/ Decrease	-152	-609	+5	-4	-805	-112

Species	Fisher	Mink	Muskrat	Ermine	Skunk	Bear
1934-35	5	1102	36712	640	63	21
1944-45	3	169	7006	3840	103	92
Increase/ Decrease	-2	-933	-29706	+3200	+40	+71

Species	Red Fox	Black Fox	Cross Fox	All Fox	Wolf
1934-35	1313	13	599	1985	15
1944-45	908	1	350	1277	38
Increase/ Decrease	-405	-12	-249	-708	+23

Species	Coyote	Lynx
1934-35	135	341
1944-45	51	17
Increase/ Decrease	-84	-324

Value of Fur Taken		Average Per Trapper
1934-35	$105,396.52	$508.17
1944-45	$ 94,108.63	$485.11

(PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3)

Beaver numbers were depleted to the east, forcing trappers to "...travel farther and farther afield to secure their season's quota of pelts" (*ibid*.:43). Fox declined to a low in 1938-39 (*ibid*.:48,53). Marten increased until the winter of 1936-37, then decreased (*ibid*.:51). Mink declined until the end of the 1930s, with the seasonal catch dropping by 50 per cent and more (*ibid*.:52). Otter, which had shown a "moderate peak" in the winter of 1934-35, dropped the following year to about one quarter of the previous population, as indicated by catches (*ibid*.). Coyote declined, as did lynx until 1939 (*ibid*.:52). Muskrat populations continued to be high until 1937-38, the last year of peak production (*ibid*.: 49-56).

This season was followed by a serious drought in 1939, which also affected waterfowl habitats. Soper commented,

> In earlier years, numerous Indians and half-breeds reaped a good income from muskrat pelts in this district; now it is practically destitute of these animals, and the native[s] are nearly destitute as well. Many muskrats still exist on some of the higher terrain of the park not so effected [*sic*] by the drought [Soper 1945:49].

Indian Agent Head commented on the very poor fur catch for the fall of 1939 everywhere, adding that he had turned down a request for relief from several Crees in the Gull River area, which would have been hard hit by the drought (PAA Head 1939).

Soper summarized the consequences of these changes in the 1930s for increased depletion of animal populations in the 1940s:

> With the slump in muskrats, the Indians necessarily turned more and more to other furbearers. As these in turn began to fall they concentrated more heavily on beaver and as beaver became scarcer, so did muskrats and mink that depended upon beaver waters. One re-acted upon another. Against this, also, was woven a background of failing fur supply caused by a periodic cycle of animal scarcity, involving such species as lynx, marten, foxes, coyotes, and snowshoe hares. Thus was set in motion a series of conse-

> quences that has led gradually to a depletion of the animal life, like a wheel within a wheel, with the Indians suffering accordingly [1945:49-50].

It would be extremely difficult for the animal populations to recover from the combination of natural biological catastrophes, overhunting, and the elimination of controlled burning.

Muskrat Conservation

The decline in the number of furs in the latter part of the decade led to proposals for muskrat population development or conservation schemes. One of these was initiated by Napoleon Martin, a Cree trapper who wanted to build two dams across creeks draining from sloughs near his cabin, to creat wetter and therefore better muskrat conditions. Dempsey recommended the plan, but both he and Warden Dent told Martin,

> ...I doubted if he could expect any right to exclude others from trapping there if rats became plentiful, but he said he did not expect to [letter from F. C. Dent, Cabin No. 3, Lake Mamawi, to M. Meikle, 15 July 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 904 file 10319].

The park administration had its own conservation plans. The idea of muskrat conservation came from a plan developed by Thomas Lamb near The Pas, Manitoba. Lamb was hired in 1937 to investigate similar possibilities for "fur farming" in Wood Buffalo Park, although there was no funding for implementation and little technical information. Further investigations occured in 1938, and two projects were proposed for dams on Murdock Creek and Dempsey Creek, affecting about 65 acres in the southeast corner of district B. Dam construction on Murdock Creek began in 1938, continued in 1939, and rquired repairs in 1940 and 1941. The budget for both projects came to over $48,000 (memo from M. Meikle re fur conservation project, Murdock Creek, 14 Jan. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 908 file 10659 pt. 1). Work was stopped in 1941 due to World War II (letter from

R. A. Gibson to Dr. K. M. Cameron, Chief Engineer, Dept. of Public Works, 29 March 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 908 file 10659 pt. 2).

The purpose of these dams was "...to restore the wildlife balance so that the overflow will restock the more heavily trapped districts adjacent to the park" (circular to permittees from J. A. Urquhart, Acting Supt. WBP, 15 Dec. 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 908 file 10659 pt. 1). For the scheme to be effective, it was considered necessary to prohibit all trapping of muskrat and beaver in the test area, although other fur bearers could be trapped. A circular distributed to permit holders contained a double message:

> The Department invites the full co-operation of the local residents in connection with this experiment for the restoration of the muskrat and beaver, and if the holders of Wood Buffalo Park permits do not engage in any activity that would impede the progress of this wild life restoration scheme it will not be necessary to withdraw their trapping privileges in the Park [ibid.].

The seven to eight families in the Murdock Creek area were not compensated for the disruption, despite the increasingly poor fur populations in the park. That is, they were expected to give up their major trapping activities in the area in order that other areas would eventually benefit.

The dam construction was supposed to use Indian labor "...to a great extent on this work in order to assist the Indians" (memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 12 May 1941, PAC RG 85 v. 908 file 10659 pt. 1). However, Meikle pointed out that his costs were higher as a result, because "This labour is much less efficient than white labour..." (ibid.). This was the same attitude that had prevented the park from hiring Native wardens. Fur conservation projects continued after World War II and will be discussed later.

Incomes from Trapping

Fur prices varied throughout the 1930s. Father Picard recalled that prices peaked in 1935 (field journal 1977 V:25-26), and according to Karras they rose in the spring of 1936 but were low in the spring of 1939 (1975:244). Some information on incomes is available. In the 1934-35 season, all the trappers in the park averaged $508.17 each. In 1938-39, the trappers in district C averaged $293.00, while the income of trappers in district B was higher, averaging $365.00 (memo from Director to Dr. H. McGill, Director IAB, 10 Jan. 1941, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3).

A. L. Cumming said the average income of all park trappers in 1940 was $350.00, which was supplemented for Indians by treaty payments ($5.00 per year) and relief (some rations) (memo from Cumming to Gibson, 29 Nov. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). Real value was less, because the cost of supplies was increasing slowly but steadily during the 1930s. Halcrow's observations provided more detailed information on the differences between districts B and C:

> ...the Indians who have permission to trap in the 'B' part of the Wood Buffalo Park (north of Peace River) have a much greater income than those in the 'C' part and the latter have a much greater income than those who are not permitted to trap in the Park. The average income of the Indian trappers in the 'B' part is $500.00 a year; in the 'C' part $250.00 a year and for the delta east of the Park from $100.00 to $250.00. Mr. Halcrow was quite definite in his statement that the Park Indians had a much better income than those outside the Park [memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 28 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

This difference in income corresponded directly to the average area trapped in districts B and C, as shown in table 3. As well, the income of many trappers in B may have included some from furs which they obtained in district C. That is, the higher fur returns in the old park did not reflect conservation measures directly, but rather the more favorable trapper-area ratio (memo from Director to R. A. Gibson, 25 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3).

None of these incomes were high. They provided Native trappers with some income to purchase necessities, while most of their food came from the bush itself, summer and winter. White trappers probably returned in summer to farms or other income. Natives seeking simply to sustain themselves, not to accumulate profits, may have been forced in a time of low fur prices or depleted fur populations to attempt to increase their production in order to maintain their level of income, sometimes by trapping different species. The amount of fur produced in the park increased during the 1930s (letter from J. L. Grew, N. Sask. Conservation Board, to R. A. Gibson, 28 Feb. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3), which supports this interpretation. However, the 1930s were the last good trapping years in the park for some time. The 1940s would be characterized by greatly constrained trapping and hunting possibilities, while the 1950s would see a major decline in the market for furs.

Conflicts and Stresses: Trappers and Traders

In a time of intermittant animal scarcity and of variable prices, it is not surprising that some conflict among Indians occurred, as the desire to maintain one's income conflicted with the ideal of sharing. One indication that this problem existed is a letter written in 1934, in which the chiefs and councillors told Cumming that the muskrat season should not be extended after May 15, because then the pelts were inferior and the young were being born:

> I asked the different chiefs why not stop trapping on May 15th in spite of the closing date being May 30th. They

> replied that may trappers will do so but others will not which causes trouble [letter from Cumming to J. Lorne Turner, 21 July 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2].

Other conflicts have been mentioned, such as the conflict among permit holders over access to district C, and their "jealousy" over the park. Soper recalled altercations among Indian hunters and trappers about trapping areas, with the Indians appealing to park officials to help settle the location of traplines (Soper 1978). This statement is contradicted in part by Indian resistance to allocation of trapping areas.

These signs of increased strain were exascerbated by fur scarcity toward the end of the decade and reflected differentiation among trappers. The more "traditional" trappers conflicted with trappers who showed increased individualism in their trapping strategies. The Indians living in the park were becoming differentiated in their commitment to the fur trade mode of production or their willingness to abandon its ideals when faced with the realities of the fur trade as it existed in the region after World War I, hemmed in by restrictive park regulations.

Another impact of the decline in numbers of animals was financial stress for the park traders. In 1938, Fred Fraser wrote the Park Superintendent asking that residency requirements for traders be eased:

> As you know, we are having particularly poor fur years, and it is quite a saving to a Trader if he could just leave a trapper in charge of a few pieces of merchandise until the Rat season opened up...[letter from Fred Fraser to M. Meikle, 18 Jan. 1938, PAC RG 85 v. 345 file 46].

Such a change would save the trader the expense of wages, which were $65 per month. Hamdon and Alley made a similar request, which was not favorably received:

> ...it is evident their traders [Hamdon and Alley] consider it a privilege of operating in the park is for their benefit rather than convenience of natives [telegram from R. A. Gibson to M. Meikle, 30 March 1938, PAC RG 85 v. 345 file 46].

The difficulties of running a profitable trading business in a period of poor fur years led the fur traders to consolidate their operations and abandon the smaller and less profitable park posts - Baril Lake, Egg Lake, Gull River, Frog Creek - between 1936 and 1940 (J. Parker, per. commun. 1981), probably in 1938-39. By the end of the decade, the only trading posts still operating in the park were the larger ones at Hay River, Embarras River, and Jackfish River. Jackfish River did not appear in the lists of park posts in 1935-36 (cf. table 2). It may have opened in the last 1930s in response to Indian relocation from Birch River to Peace River (see chapter 6). The Embarras post was sold by Reed to Bud Pelton when Goldfields shut down at the beginning of the war.

Bison Slaughters

Other than trapping and subsistence activities, the other use of the park's resources during the 1930s was the slaughter of bison each fall to supply meat for the missions and for Indian Affairs relief programs. Indian Affairs became involved in the hunts in 1935, receiving meat for distribution "...to the infirm, the needy and the older people in the settlement" (WBNP Mitchell 1976:9). Such support would traditionally have come from the leaders of the local bands, who were now bypassed by the Indian Agent. The number of bison taken was small, no more than 21 bison in any one year, according to Mitchell (*ibid*.:28). The usual number going to the mission at Fort Chipewyan was eight, ranging from six to ten (ibid.). However, a government memo recorded that in 1938 eighteen bison were slaughtered to meet "requirements" in the Chipewyan "vicinity" (memo from ? to Cumming, 14 Dec. 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). This number represented both mission and Indian Affairs needs. It is tempting to speculate that mission needs were up because the commercial fishery may have negatively affected the mission food fishery, leaving the mission short of food for the winter, or because more people were leaving their children in the mission as a way of dealing with their increasingly precarious fur trade economic situation. Thirty bison were slaughtered in the November -December 1939 hunt, with twenty going to the mission and ten to Indian Affairs (report from M. J. Dempsey to J. A. Urquhart, 12 Feb. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2).

Tuberculosis among park bison was first reported in 1937 and 1938 in the Fort Chipewyan mission diaries, but nothing was done about it for a decade (WBNP Mithcell 1976:9). This tuberculosis was almost certainly introduced by the Wainwright bison. It is likely that infected meat was consumed by mission residents and those receiving relief, since tuberculosis was more common in the older animals, which were the ones slaughtered.

As an adjunct to protecting the bison, the park staff initiated a wolf poisoning program between 1935 and 1940 (WBNP Mitchell 1976:40). Wolves were rarely hunted by Native trappers. Traditionally, Chipewyans believed that they were related to wolves, and they would not kill them (cf. Soper 1945:34 for the persistence of this belief). As well, wolves were considered very difficult to trap. Soper said that since 1935, no more than 55 wolves had been killed each year in the park (1945:54), although he claimed that they had become more numerous in the park from about 1932 on (ibid.:19). The wolf control program was not pursued aggressively until the 1940s. It will be discussed in more detail later.

Proposed Commercial Exploitation Schemes

The park maintained its anti-development position during the 1930s, although threats to this policy came from both park officials and outsiders. In 1931, Finnie proposed that the bison might be hunted for sport or be commercially slaughtered, in a fascinating and prescient memo:

> Within the next few years the buffalo should bring in a good revenue. I think the time has arrived when there should be a provision whereby hunters, under the supervision of a park warden, might be permitted to kill one or more buffalo under permit. The hunter might be allowed to ratain the skull and the hide and should, therefore, be prepared to pay a substantial fee for a permit. This should bring a good revenue and in addition there would be the revenue from the sale of the meat. In the near future an abattoir will have to be established in the park and provision made to dry the meat and make pemmican [memo from Finnie to H. H. Rowatt, Dep. Min. of the Interior, 9 Dec. 1931, PAC RG 85 v. 768 file 5164 pt. 3].

Clearly, Finnie was not considering allowing hunting by Native residents of the park, but by sportshunters. Part of his money-making scheme would become a reality twenty years later. In the meantime, Rowatt suggested that "...it would be extremely unwise to permit the Indian families to visit the Park and shoot buffalo even under the supervision of a warden" (memo from H. H. Rowatt to Hume, 8 Feb. 1932, PAC RG 85 v. 768 file 5164 pt. 3). No consideration was given to the possibility of allowing some limited subsistence hunting by the people who had traditionally hunted the bison of the area. Dewey Soper supported the idea of an abattoir for commercial purposes, without allowing Native hunting. There should be no shooting of bison by Indians, he advised, because "after all the park is a sanctuary and the line must be drawn somewhere." But,

> If an available surplus of buffalos is ascertained, the establishment of a government controlled abattoir is quite a different matter, and through this channel the Indians could be removed from want if desired. Missions and individual white residents could also secure a desirable quantity of winter meat from the same source. I agree that the line of an abattoir might be profitably considered [memo from J. Dewey Soper to Major McKeand, 12 Feb. 1932, PAC RG 85 v. 768 file 5164 pt. 3].

Similar contradictions characterized the park's policy toward bison utilization after World War II.

In another area of potential profit, people were eager to explore for minerals within the park in the 1930s. In 1935, Adam Dene, a Chipewyan from Birch River, claimed that he had found a rich mineral deposit toward the Birch Mountain (letter from Father J. L. Coudert to A. L. Cumming, 20 Aug. 1935, Archives of the Bishop). Coudert wanted to ensure that the park's policy still prohibited mining in order to protect the interests of the Indians. Cumming assured him that he had already refused a permit to one prospector, although he said that "It woudl be wonderful if some local people could benefit by any discoveries that should be made. I will protect them as much as possible" (letter from Cumming to Coudert, 26 Aug. 1935, Archives of the Bishop). There was no further word of Dene's samples.

Finally, McInnes Products Corporation tried again to obtain access to Lake Mamawi in the park for a commercial fishing operation (cf. Potyondi 1979:99). In February, 1939, the park superintendent wrote to McInnes about the company's intentions:

> A report has been received that your company contemplate[s] carrying on commercial fishing on Lake Mamawi during the coming season and as this lake is within the boundaries of the Wood Buffalo Park, it is necessary that this Department

> be advised of any such proposed operations as no commercial fishing can be undertaken without the necessary authority [letter from M. Meikle to McInnes Fish Company, 3 Feb. 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

William Schlader, the manager of McInnes, replied with a request for permission to fish Lake Mamawi, adding that the Alberta Government had already granted the company special permission to fish for goldeye in Lake Athabasca (letter from W. Schlader to M. Meikle, 16 Feb. 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).

Church and Indian Affairs officials opposed McInnes' application:

> "Bishop Faillaize called and strongly opposes granting any commercial fishing that lake as large numbers [of] Indians depend on fish for a living and supply limited" [memo from R. A. Gibson to Cumming, 28 Feb. 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/100 pt. 1].

Indian Agent Dr. Head at Fort Chipewyan radioed to his department,

> "Request Department make strong protest against commercial fishing in Lake Mamawi Wood Buffalo Park Stop Will ruin fishing for Indians dependent on that area for food and dog feed" [cited in memo from T. R. L. MacInnes, Sec. DIA, to R. A. Gibson, 28 Feb. 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

A note written at the bottom of this memo, probably by a park official, sates, "We depend entirely on fishing in Lake Mamawi to feed our 60 dogs....Fish is not any too plentiful in this Lake" (ibid.). McInnes' application was denied.

The company was unhappy with the decision:

> We note that your department is not inclined to grant commercial fishing licences for the Lake Mamawi area as it is your contention that the supply of fish there is barely sufficient for the native residents. We have heard that plea so many times that, frankly, we cannot agree with your statement. If the commercial fishing interests listened to such arguments, we are afraid that there would not be any commercial fishing carried on throughout the Dominion of Canada. That is, as we say, an age-old statement. It has been made to us many times, and, we presume, by people that do not know what quantities of fish are available. In other words, it is used more as a pro-

> tection to those interests that do not want the white man to exploit the fisheries, contending that they should be reserved entirely for the Natives. It is regrettable that such stands are taken because we know otherwise, firstly, because generally the statement is without foundation.... Secondly, because when these fish are available for commercial fisheries, then we say the district should be open so that our people may procure a livelihood from that source [letter from Schlader to Gibson, 24 March 1939, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

These statements were made in general ignorance about the capacity of Lake Mamawi to support commercial fishing and still feed people who relied on it for subsistence. However, McInnes wanted to test the lake, though the company did not specify what such testing would have entailed. This application was stronger than the one made in the 1920s, and McInnes did not give up. It would meet with success nine years later, in 1948 (chapter 7).

THE REST OF ALBERTA

While life for Natives in the park stabilized during the 1930s, the condition for Natives without access to the park continued to deteriorate. In 1930, Indian Agent Gerald Card reported that the Indians of Fort Chipewyan, "...owing to the scarcity of, and the low price of fur, find it very difficult to make a living at this time" (letter from Card to W. M. Graham, Indian Commissioner, Regina, 5 Dec. 1930, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). Things were no better in 1931, when the Edmonton Journal reported,

> "At Fort Chipewyan, there exists the greatest hardships, no fur, no fish, caribou are far to the West....
>
> "It is difficult to understand in effect how these Indians are permitted to suffer from hunger in the midst of thousands of buffalo" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:288-9].[15]

That year, Scott "...found it necessary to get a supplementary appropriation of $200,000 to relieve destitution up to the 31st March next" (letter from Duncan C. Scott to George Binney,HBC, 31 July 1931, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1). That amount must have been divided up among many bands throughout the north; the relief which usually provided was rations and occasionally ammunition and other supplies.

Despite difficulties for Natives, Alberta continued to benefit from the high level of trapping both indirectly - trappers were at least supporting themselves and not becoming a public charge - and directly, through the collection of royalty fees on furs trapped in both the Alberta portion of the park and non-park Alberta. The park staff estimated that in 1933 the royalties taken in the park amounted to about $2,500, based on a rate of 6% (memo from ? to H. H. Rowatt, 14 Nov. 1933, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2). No funds were returned in services to the trappers of the area. The provincial government proposed to resolve the problems caused by overtrapping and hunting in the north by increased regulation and the introduction of registered traplines, suggested by 1933 (Bill Russell 1981:25) or 1934 (letter from J. A. McDougal to J. Lorne Turner, 22 Oct. 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 2). However, these would not be brought in until the 1940s; they are discussed in the next chapter.

Fort Chipewyan Métis also faced new hardships during the 1930s, as entrepreneurs modernized and streamlined their operations in Depression efforts to reduce overhead. This section discusses the problems faced especially by people living in the bush, but also those of town residents, and the efforts by both groups to cope. As well, it comments on the commercial fishing on the lake during the Depression years.

The Chipewyan Reserves

The Chipewyans living in the delta pursued two strategies. The first was to gain admittance to the park. Unless they could demonstrate that they had been hunting and trapping in the park area at the time it was annexed, however, their applications were denied. Their second strategy was to continue their efforts of the 1920s to have a hunting and trapping preserve created and to obtain the reserve promised them in Treaty 8. Bill Russell has researched this process for the Indian Association of Alberta (1981). He says that the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) finally acted in 1931, when it surveyed land for reserves at Big Point, Old Fort Point, Jackfish Village (28th base line), and at the southern extremity of Richardson or Jackfish Lake. H. W. Fairchild, who did the survey, said that there should also be small reserves at Poplar Point and Point Brulé, both long-term Chipewyan settlements (Bill Russell 1981:16), as well as a large expanse of Athabasca delta designated as reserve land. He

> ...recommended that the band's strict entitlement should not be used to determine reserve size, because they would then be left with a tract that did not take in entirely the best muskrat grounds, and that was not suitably bounded by a permanent water channel [Bill Russell 1981:17].

This entitlement was 42,240 acres in 1931, based on the principle that the amount of land to which a band was entitled should continue to grow along with its population until the reserve was created (ibid.:33-34,36). Unfortunately, the Chipewyan population of the 1930s was considerably less (330 people) than the number who were listed in 1899 (410) people, so they may have been entitled to more land.

The province stalled when requested to transfer land to the federal government for the reserve. It was uncomfortable with the idea of using aerial rather than instrumental surveys to delineate the reserve boundaries in the marshy expanse of the delta, but the federal government was not able to allot more funds to survey work at that time. Moreover, the province did not want to give up more land than that to which the band was entitled under a strict interpretation of the treaty (Bill Russell 1981:16). In fact, the difference in square miles between the size of actual entitlement and the size of the land requested for the reserve was only 13.1 square miles (ibid.:18). But, all land was prime muskrat trapping terrain.

On March 6, 1935, land was "designated" by the Alberta Executive Council for the exclusive use of trappers resident in the area. It included the entire northeast corner of Alberta, extending from the NWT border south to the 27th base line and from the Wood Buffalo Park eastern border east to Saskatchewan (Bill Russell 1981:25; Fumoleau 1975:289). While this measure prevented new trappers from entering the area, it did not reduce the trapping activities of non-Natives already there (Bill Russell 1981:25; Fumoleau 1975:289).

By 1935, Indian Affairs was willing to do whatever surveying was necessary to establish the Chipewyan reserve. However, the province said that now it was willing to accept a reserve plan based on the partial instrumental surveys and on aerial photos, as well as to transfer a larger amount of land for the reserve than allowed for by the treaty provisions (Bill Russell 1981:19). The federal government prepared plan 2642 for Indian Reserve (I.R.) 201 and plans 2559-2565 for I.R. 201A to G, the small reserves around the settlements. These were sent to the provincial government for its consideration in August, 1935. Russell thinks that these plans were seriously flawed because they excluded Egg Lake and a number of channels or "snyes" which led from that lake directly into the reserve. There were also unresolved problems about whether or not non-Indians could be restricted from entering the reserves on the waterways and from trapping and hunting along these waterways (ibid.:19-21). Alberta did not act on these plans immediately.

Jonas Laviolette, chief of the Chipewyan band, wrote to Bishop Breynat in 1936, asking for his assistance in speeding up the process:

> "We cannot do anything. White trappers steal our trapping grounds. They remove our traps. There is nobody to protect us, and we cannot protect ourselves on our own land against these invaders who become masters of our country. James Eylmer, a Lake Brochet trapper, went to Edmonton last spring, he stole my name and showed himself as the chief of this district. He attacked the Treaty Indians. Although the Indian Agent and Police know him, they let him do it...Also Raymond Shank attacked Frank Ladouceur and nearly drowned him...These foreign White trappers treat us badly, but we can in no way do anything to stop them... We desire to have a Game Preserve but we cannot obtain it... On our traplines, even very close to our houses, there are foreign White trappers. We cannot be our own boss even right close to our houses" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:289].

Later that year Laviolette and his councillor, Chrysostome Ogakiye, wrote again to Breynat:

> "We wish to give you a few details of our troubles, in this place, and beg your Lordship to see if you could do something for our welfare with the Indian Department, because we see the hard times coming fast; I mean that people from outside, both whites and half-breeds from other places are not leaving us in peace to trap; even our trapping lines are not left alone to ourselves. The trapping lines that we set are not respected, although we worked hard to the trails before those strangers came, and we were on those trapping lines for 30 years and more before those men came to the country. We are no longer masters of our own trapping lines. We are rather up against it and no one to help us, even the Police and the Indian Agent do not help us on this matter. It seems that we are not Masters of our own Land; Therefore, we would be very thankful to you, dear Bishop, if you could do something for us...These half-breed trappers do not obey the laws of the Province and kill everything they can lay hands on. Let me tell you that they do far more harm than the Indian Department thinks. The white people who come to our hunting grounds are just as bad as the Half Breeds. If the Government

> does not stop them, we cannot after a certain time, make our own living. We should get a PRESERVE like Resolution, Fort Rae, and Peel River, to keep the strangers out of our own trapping grounds..." [cited in Fumoleau 1975:289-90].

The federal government responded in December, 1936, to Breynat's lobbying on behalf of the Indians by announcing a new development program to assist trappers. A year later, however, Native trappers were still waiting for the government to undertake concrete action on the announcement (Fumoleau 1975:277-8). Breynat presented affidavits from himself and other northerners reminding the government of the treaty promises it had made, and he organized a pressure group, the Oblate Indian and Eskimo Commission, which made representation on behalf of the northern Indians (Fumpleau 1975:277-9). This Commission correctly pointed out the two causes of the Indians' misfortunes: White trappers exterminating the game, and the federal government not honoring the promises in the treaty (ibid.:278).

While the federal and provincial governments pondered their various courses of action, Indians at Fort Chipewyan continued to face hard times. In 1937, a Chipewyan man was convicted of trapping beaver illegally (Report on conclusion of a case, 22 Feb. 1939, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). Alberta was not willing to open the beaver season before Saskatchewan and Manitoba did, presumably to prevent beaver poaching and subsequent marketing in an open area (memo from Director DIA to the Dep. Min., 13 March 1937, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). However, it finally provided an open season for beaver from March 1 to April 20, 1937, for resident trappers, with the requirement that each pelt had to be stamped and recorded by the RCMP, the fur tax collector, or a game official (Notice, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4). Other regulations posed new difficulties for the Indians. For instance, in 1937

> At Chipewyan fourteen Indians have been tried and fined for feeding dogs with cariboo meat without being given a chance at any assistance not even by the Agent while it is of Public Notice that white trappers are generally freely doing same without being molested stop. I again insist upon necessity of making thorough investigation on unnecessary and unfair hardships imposed on Indians by Game Regulations Provincial and Federal without consideration for promises made in name of Crown at Treaty Time [telegram from Bishop Breynat to Hon. T. A. Crerar, Min. Mines and Resources, 5 April 1937, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4; cited also in Fumoleau 1975:290].

Indian Affairs responded that

> The Police explained to the Indians that they could kill caribou for their own food, but not for dog feed [memo from Director DIA, 22 April 1937, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-4].

Sergeant Vernon explained his reason for prosecuting these Indians:

> "There was no excuse for this wanton waste of caribou, the only reason being that these people are too lazy to fish in the fall; hence this prosecution" [ibid.].

The RCMP seem not to have seen that the use of fish for winter dog food could have tied Indians to the lake, where the fish would have been put up, or would have required them to transport the fish to their hunting and trapping grounds, a considerable distance from the fish lake. Moreover, there may have been a double standard of law enforcement, with Indian trappers more frequently charged than White trappers (and see below).

Finally, in November, 1937, Alberta passed Order-in-Council 1399/37, granting Certificates of Title for the surface rights to 49,600 acres of land in the Athabasca delta for the Chipewyan reserves. However, the province reserved certain rights:

1. Free use of all navigable waters flowing through the reserves;

2. All mines and minerals together with full power to work the same;
3. All rights of fishery and fishing and occupation in connection therewith, upon, around and adjacent to the lands;
4. No "exclusive or other property or interest in or any exclusive right or privilege with respect to any lake, river, spring, stream, or other body of water, within or bordering on or passing through" the different tracts [Bill Russell 1981:22].

The province was by this time concerned about the plight of Métis in northern Alberta, and it wanted to protect their interests in the delta. The reserves would result in problems into the 1940s, because of confusion about boundaries and the rights of non-Indians to trap from waterways and on the banks of rivers (Bill Russell 1981:22-3). In 1947, the federal government was able to persuade Alberta to transfer rights for mines and minerals to the federal government as part of the reserve. New Certificates of Title covering mineral rights (except gold and silver) were issued on October 16, 1947. Alberta passed a new Order-in-Council P.C. 1059/48 on September 14, 1948, confirming the transfer of lands and mineral rights to the federal government on behalf of the Chipewyan band (ibid.:22). The Government of Canada proclaimed the area a reserve in June, 1954, through Orders-in-Council P.C. 1954-817 (I.R. 201) and P.C. 1954-900 (I.R. 201A-G) (ibid.:240).

The amount of land which was granted for a reserve was actually somewhat greater than the amount the band was entitled to under the treaty. It was based on the entire Chipewyan population, even though many of the Chipewyans lived within the park (field journal; cf. Bill Russell 1981:30). It seems that the park Chipewyan were not involved in obtaining this particular reserve, and that the government simply assumed that they would never obtain a reserve in the park and so added their numbers to the Chipewyans resident outside the park, perhaps under the assumption that one day the park Chipewyans might have to leave the park and move to the reserve. The reserve, depleted of fur, was not large enough to support even those Chipewyans who did use it, who were from the Old Fort, Big Point, Jackfish Lake, and perhaps Athabasca River communities. Given these limitations and the conflict which was developing between Indians with and without access to the park, it is unlikely that the reserve or delta Chipewyans would have welcomed Chipewyans from the park. There is some evidence which suggests that they might have been denied access to it (field journal 1977 V:34), although this event seems unlikely. It is probable that the park Chipewyans were passive rather than active participants in acquiring the reserve, and they neither benefited from it nor saw it as a homeland. What the park Chipewyans wanted was a reserve in the park. Their strategy to obtain this reserve will be discussed in the next chapter.

The existence of the reserve did not seem to make much difference to Chipewyan livelihood, because of continued entry into the reserve by non-Indians and the resulting depletion of resources. Breynat reported in 1938, "Near Chipewyan, once a rich fur country, the Indians lived on gray squirrels last winter. This year even the squirrels were gone" (in Fumoleau 1975:384). Indian Agent Head predicted that Indians without access to the park would "...be more or less forced into relief until next winter" (memo from T. R. L. MacInnes to Dept. Comm. NWT, 6 June 1938, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 2A). Chief Jonas Laviolette wrote in the spring of the same year to the Alberta Minister of Agriculture with serious complaints:

> "I am taking the liberty of writing you, with regard to the game Regulations enforced this winter which puts us in an

> awkward position to make our living at this place, and as Chief of the Chipewyan band, I have to make some complaints to you, and I hope you take steps to remedy the situation, that is to say, that the strangers from outside (white trappers) are taking all our best hunting grounds from us, and they do not allow the Indians to hunt near these, and this has been going on since a good few years. The result is, a good many Chipewyans of my Band cannot find any place to trap rats; and how are we to live, all the place left for Chipewyan belonging to Jack Fish Lake, old Fort and Big Point is the delta, which is barren, no rats there, nothing but sand bars, and we cannot go anywhere also to trap rats.
>
> "I wish to mention also, that the present Game Guardian...is not fit for a game Guardian, is siding on white trappers only, and Indians never see him to talk to him, I presume that his Game Guardian and a few trappers (his favourites) are the ones that are making laws as they please.
>
> "And another thing is, if an Indian sets a few traps before the white trappers, those white trappers take the traps away (Indian traps) and set their own traps there. We cannot call that just, that which happens often; according to our Treaty, we are free to trap and fish and hunt anywhere.
>
> "I wish to mention also that the White trappers are taking Big ground and Big Lakes for their own trappings, while a poor old Indian has no chance to kill a few rats, and most of these white trappers are Russians, Germans and Swedes. I want fair play for my Band of Chipewyans and I hope the Government comes to our rescue" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:291-2; emphasis in the original].

The Alberta Game Commissioner acknowledged the complaints, assuring Laviolette that the offending trappers had been ordered to leave the area and that in the future the regulations would be enforced more stringently (ibid.). In Saskatchewan, the decline in demand for long-haired furs led White trappers to abandon their traplines and return south (Jarvenpa 1977:181); possibly Alberta trappers acted similarly. Alberta would finally resolve the situation a few years later by introducing registered traplines (see chapter 5), although that was not what the Indians wanted, because it both restricted their trapping mobility and allowed the remaining White trappers to control many of the best trapping areas.

1939 brought a new threat to Native livelihood: a major drought, which decimated the muskrat population. A 1940 memo reported,

> ...the rat population in the delta is at a low ebb it being estimated that there are not over one thousand rats on it at the present time. We have also reports that in 1932-33 over thirty thousand rats were taken out of the area; in 1936 ten thousand; and from that point on they gradually decreased until we arrived at the present date of virtual depletion [memo from Director to R. A. Gibson, 25 Oct. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Halcrow, who had evaluated the Athabasca delta for a possible muskrat development project, had asked the Chipewyan chief and headmen of the reserve if they could not go farther away for trapping, "...but found it would not work out, as the grounds were occupied by white trappers and Indians from other bands" (ibid.). Halcrow, who noted the higher fur returns in the park and the more favorable trapper-area ratio, proposed that twenty younger Chipewyan trappers be allowed into the park to trap so that a development scheme could proceed in the delta. The delta Chipewyans were eager to cooperate (ibid.), but the park officials responded negatively. First, they questioned Halcrow's information:

> No doubt Mr. Halcrow is very sympathetic for the Indians but from his letter it would appear that he is listening to all the storekeepers at Chipewyan and a large number of Indians who wish to obtain permission to trap in the Park. Every Indian who is not entitled to trap in this area is always ready to give advise and criticize Wood Buffalo Park management [memo from A. L. Cumming to Gibson, 29 Nov. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Generally, the park officials were opposed to any increase in the number of trappers with access to the park:

> Any attempt to increase the number of hunters would probably defeat our object [to ensure conservation of animals] by causing those who have hunting privileges in the Park to conduct their operations more intensively. We have been hoping that it might be possible for us to induce some of the eligible hunters to keep away from those areas in the Park where we have erected dams...[memo from Director of Mines and Resources to Cumming, 28 Oct. 1940; cf. also memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 28 Oct. 1940; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Efforts to gain access to the park by Chipewyans would continue through 1942, when the park administration resolved the matter by deciding that it could not legally allow additional trappers (memo from Dept. Commissioner to Cumming, 13 Jan. 1942; memo from Cumming to Gibson, 29 Jan. 1942; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3).

Métis

There were two distinct groups of Métis living in the region: the Lac La Biche Métis, located mainly at Big Point, which was also the location of some Chipewyan and their proposed reserve, and the French and Scots Métis resident in Fort Chipewyan itself. While there were cultural and occupational differences between them, both relied on trapping and hunting throughout the 1930s, so they were affected in ways similar to the Indians by the competition from White trappers.

Although the local Indians had initially objected to the Lac La Biche Métis, correspondence suggests that by the 1930s, the Chipewyans considered them to be similar in situation to themselves, distinguishing them from White trappers. By 1940, the Métis and Chipewyan had had approximately twenty years to develop a mutual accommodation as permanent neighbors and even members of the same social community. One Métis woman recalled sharing food with the Chipewyans on many occasions and getting assistance from Chipewyan women in processing waterfowl in the fall (field journal 1977). There were at least half a dozen intermarriages (AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.) to cement the relationships into a traditional alliance. Although some White trappers were forced to relocate following the creation of the Chipewyan reserve, the Chipewyans may have wanted the Métis to stay in the area (field journal 1977 V:25-26,65). One Métis explained that Chief Laviolette had requested that the Big Point Métis - the Ladouceurs and Cardinals - not be disturbed; that is, that the reserve not include the lands on which they were living (ibid. V:66). Although this recollection does not accord completely with the evidence, it does indicate a relationship between Chipewyans and Lac La Biche Métis which was different from the relationship between these Indians and Métis and the White trappers, reflecting their distinctive modes of production.

The Métis, with their gardens, cattle, and occasional wage labor to supplement their production from hunting, fishing, and trapping, may not have suffered as badly as their Chipewyan neighbors during the 1930s, but their situation cannot have been good either. The correspondence treats all Métis, town and bush, similarly, which reflects the fact that Fort Chipewyan town Métis were forced more and more into hunting and trapping during the 1930s.

These Métis had traditionally been involved in wage labor. They complained in 1932 and later to the Royal Commission on the Condition of the Halfbreed Population of the Province of Alberta (PAA Govt. of the Province of Alberta 1936) about the scarcity of wage labor during the decade, despite the expansion of the northern transportation industries (letter from A. Victor Mercredi to J. A. McDougal, 29 Nov. 1932, in F. A. Brady Papers, file for 1931-2 correspondence, Glenbow Archives, courtesy of Theresa Ferguson; PAA Govt. of theProvince of Alberta 1936). Rolf Knight comments on a similar situation for the James Bay area:

> In the East James Bay region the economy and polity of the classic trapping society stagnated in the 1920s and virtually collapsed during the 1930s. The disastrous fall in fur prices, the retrenchment policy of the HBC during the depression, the widespread decimation of many of the most valuable fur bearing animals, and also the entry of new

> means of transport, were factors involved.
>
> Local artisan production had been retained on the posts largely because of the isolation and the necessity of a large degree of post self-sufficiency. With planes, and other new transport facilities, it became cheaper for the HBC to ship in formerly locally-produced items and services. Apparently, some Metis-Indian artisans had already begun to leave Rupert House for the developing resource regions by the late 1920s. The railway reached Moosonee, on the Bay, in 1932 and many of the remaining artisans and transport employees became redundant [1978:173].

Some Métis were replaced by White southerners. A letter regarding an application by Thomas L. Loutit for hunting and trapping permits in the park for his sons explained that "...Mr. Loutit's occupation as [HBC] Post manager is no longer open to him..." and that therefore "...he finds it necessary to trap for a living..." (letter from M. J. Dempsey to M. Meikle, 12 Sept. 1937, PAC RG 85 v. 845 file 7744 pt. 1; emphasis added). In other words, as Métis were displaced by modernization in supplying the northern mercantile operations, they were forced to rely more on fur trapping, hunting, and fishing, even though the resources they turned to were declining and could not adequately support even those people who had used them traditionally.

The poverty of the Fort Chipewyan Métis appears to begin in this period. They, too, were eager to have a hunting and trapping preserve established to protect their interests from White trappers, as a 1935 letter from A. Victor Mercredi to the Metis Commission indicates:

> I also pointed out to him that white Trappers are flocking in more plentiful [sic] every year and are settling more around the Delta which is our best country for Trapping Rats, hunting Wavies and Fishing and now in view of the fact that we are getting crowded so much and in order to protect ourselves, I asked him in behalf of the Metis residents of Fort Chipewyan to be our spokesman with the Government and ask the Government to grant us a Preserve for Hunting and Trapping and when he presents our request may he ask that portion of land:

> Viz. From the Delta running South to Old Fork [Embarras?] 40 miles above the Athabasca River running east from Old Fork to Alta. Sask. Boundary running North to Athabasca Lake South shore running West along the South shore to the Delta.
>
> As you are probably aware the majority of the Half Breeds of this place live on trapping and Fishing and there is no work to talk about; and if we are not granted a Preserve at the rate new Comers are flocking in it will not be long and all the Half Breeds and Indians will be on Relief [letter from A. Victor Mercredi to M. F. Norris, 3 March 1935, PAA Half-breed Commission n.d.:431].

Breynat agreed that a preserve to protect the Métis was needed (PAA Govt. of the Province of Alberta 1936:137), and he and Father Coudert made representations to that effect to the Metis Commission (ibid.). This Commission, established in 1934 to inquire into the condition of Métis throughout Alberta, heard testimony about and from Métis in major centers and in many smaller, outlying communities, including Fort Chipewyan. Unfortunately, no transcript of the testimony heard at Fort Chipewyan has been found. Some Lac La Biche Métis asked that a Métis colony be created at Big Point or further up the Athabasca River (field journal), but no formal request has been located, and no government action was ever taken.

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing continued on Lake Athabasca during the 1930s, but it provided little employment for local Natives. Roy Schlader says that McInnes' operation on the land was "hand to mouth" during the Depression (1978). There was not a big market for fish, which was reduced even further in the mid-1930s when the U.S. Food and Drug Administration imposed an embargo on infested whitefish, which affected Lake Athabasca whitefish. The Lake Athabasca fishery was still based primarily on lake trout, found mostly in the Saskatchewan end of the lake.

The company did some fishing around Big Island in the fall, and it had a fish camp on Burntwood Island. Big Island was the focus of the fall mission fisheries as well; it is not known if the commercial fishing created problems for the subsistence fishing of the Fort Chipewyan community (Schlader 1978; field journal 1977).

CONCLUSION

The 1920s and 1930s were decades of major structural changes in the social formation of the Fort Chipewyan region, both in access to and control over local resources and in exploitative patterns. Federal and provincial governments and entrepreneurs saw the north as an area which could produce profits once it had been "developed." This chapter has demonstrated that such development proceeded directly at the expense of the Native hunters and trappers of the Fort Chipewyan region. They experienced the devastation of their resource base and a serious deterioration of their ability to provide for even their most basic needs.

For twenty years, the Indians and Métis residents of the Fort Chipewyan region worked within a framework in which competition for resources and the consequent resource depletion was "normal," not exceptional. This situation reduced the ability of all Natives to continue to be able to reproduce themselves through the fur trade mode of production. Indeed, the 1920s and 1930s epidemics of various diseases, including tuberculosis, reduced populations. Native susceptibility to these diseases and the high mortality rates may have resulted from inadequate diets and other stresses related to their often desperate situations.

The creation of Wood Buffalo Park in 1922 and 1926 eased the situation of those Natives with access to the park, but it also erected lines of division between them and Natives without this access. Ties between kinsmen were obstructed and partially severed, while new bonds within the park Native communities were established by their common interests. Outside the park, competition for fur and food resoures was severe. The creation of the Chipewyan Indian reserve in the late 1930s did not help reduce this competition because of the ambiguity about access to the reserve along the provincially controlled waterways, the depletion of resources, and the unwillingness of non-Chipewyans to be denied the rich muskrat-trapping areas contained within the reserve. Even in the late 1970s, people in Fort Chipewyan remembered the extreme poverty of the delta Chipewyans in those years. This poverty stigmatized them and lowered their status in the eyes of others of the region, although it was beyond their control.

Indians and Métis wrote letters to government officials, asking for at least equitable treatment, if not preferential treatment, as the traditional occupants of the region. Breynat made representations on their behalf (various correspondence, Archives of the OMI). Breynat warned the provincial government that

> ...in a short white, if no step is taken by the Department for the protection of the Indians in that district, they will become a charge for the Government, as destitutes and indigents [letter from Archbishop Breynat to the Hon. D. B. Mullen, Min. of Ag., 18 Jan. 1940, Archives of the OMI].

This argument was probably of little concern to the Alberta government, which viewed Indians as federal, not provincial charges. Breynat charged

> ...that the complaints of the Indians in that district are fairly founded on facts. White people have been given too much freedom by the Alberta provincial authorities, it seems, and the conditions of the indian population is surely more

> and more becoming acute, and His Excellency is of the opinion that very soon a great number of them will have to be supported directly by the Government [letter from Chancellor to Dr. H. W. McGill, Director, Indian Affairs Branch, 18 Jan. 1940, Archives of the OMI].

Indians received rations from the Indian Agent in Fort Chipewyan, though Métis did not have such sources of assistance (field journals 1977; 1978). Forced by circumstances to rely on rations which the government would or could provide, the Indians found their own support systems weakened by links to the Agent. Métis simply became more impoverished. Under these circumstances of deterioration, the persistence of Fort Chipewyan Natives in living the "traditional" life seems all the more remarkable.

The next chapter details the crisis years of the 1940s, when this lifestyle finally became impossible for many Natives of the region. It is followed by a chapter which discusses in greater detail the persistence of and impacts of stresses on this traditional lifestyle based on the fur trade mode of production.

NOTES

[1] The name was changed from RNWMP to Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in 1920, when the force was reorganized (RCMP n.d.:n.p.).

[2] One informant suggested that at least some of the traders encouraged overtrapping because of the larger amounts of fur which were produced (field journal 1977 V:25).

[3] In a related topic, J. M. Bird applied to build a "stopping place" at La Bute in 1925, "...for the accomodation [sic] of the Public..." (letter from J. M. Bird to Supt. WBP, 19 April 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 760 file 4844). A letter from McDougal explained the reason for Bird's request:

> Mr. Bird is a Pilot on one of the Hudson Bay Steamers during the summer, he lives oppositie [sic] La Bute and operates a small trading outpost for the Hudson Bay Company in winter time he also serves meals, etc.
>
> If the new winter road is constructed through the Park all the travel will pass through the Park. The Wardens at the Hay Camp and La Bute have a great many trippers applying for permission to stop over night during the winter [letter from J. A. McDougal to the Director, 16 May 1925, PAC RG 85 v. 760 file 4844].

Bird claimed that the wardens did not want this added responsibility. McDougal recommended that Bird be allowed to build his "road house" at Hay Camp, "...where we will possibly have a Warden located permanently" (ibid.). However, the roadhouse was never approved or constructed. This correspondence is of interest also because of the discussion of road construction in the park at this early date.

[4] A bison report prepared in 1954 stated,

> It appears probable...that no pathological conditions of any consequence were to be found in the bison of Wood Buffalo Park before the introduction of animals from Wainwright Park. It was known prior to 1925, when the introduction of plains bison to Wood Buffalo Park was being contemplated, that the animals of Wainwright Park were so ridden with tuberculosis that ten per cent of those slaughtered had to be condemned for human consumption [WBNP Stevens 1954:1].

[5] Despite federal provision for continued hunting and trapping in the park, the Province of Alberta was almost instrumental in turning the park into the true sanctuary desired by federal officials. Benjamin Lawton, the Alberta Game Commissioner, pointed out that hunting and trapping of "furred animals" were not allowed in forest reserves or national parks located in Alberta by "a special Order in Council of the Alberta Government..." (memo from J. A. McDougal to Finnie, 5 Nov. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). Graham confirmed this "delicate" question:

> ...it is perfectly true that these persons, Indians and Whites, who formerly hunted and trapped in the new area, are now, since it has become part of a Dominion Park, infringing the Alberta Game Act by hunting and trapping therein [memo from Graham to Finnie, 12 Nov. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

However, McDougal noted that in the past this restriction had been enforced only in a limited way and that the park had made a commitment to local residents not to exclude them from the annex:

> In connection with the above regulations [re hunting and trapping in a national park in Alberta], I might say during the past two years our Wardens have been instructed to prohibit Treaty Indians from killing beaver in that portion of the Park situated in Alberta. Other furred animals have been trapped by Indians in that portion of the Park owing to the fact that we were only instructed to prohibit beaver from being killed. ...
>
> When the new area of the Park was under consideration I promised the Treaty Indians and other trappers in the new area, that their hunting rights would not be interfered with if the Park boundaries were extended. I have also instructed our Wardens to allow these Treaty Indians and other trappers the same privileges they enjoyed in the past [memo from J. A. McDougal to Finnie, 5 Nov. 1926, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

Graham's memo (above) approved McDougal's actions, and evidently the federal and provincial governments resolved this dilemma in favor of the federal position, because hunting and trapping continued in the park.

[6] Indian Agent Gerald Card apparently reversed his earlier position that all Treaty 8 Indians should have access to the park (letter from G. D. Murphy to Director, 8 Feb. 1927, PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A). Card claimed that there had been a misunderstanding, but it was more likely that local Indians had opposed his earlier stand.

[7] The park administration was worried that traders who stayed overnight with Indians resident in the old park might do some illegal trading, so

> ...it has now been decided to prohibit traders or their employees to enter this area (old Park) for any purpose whatever, except when accompanied by a Warden of the Wood Buffalo Park patrol service [letter from J. A. McDougal to Colin Fraser, 1 July 1929, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870].

[8] In 1927, the St. Bruno farm contained 140 cattle, to which the increased number of bison posed a "triple danger" (Breynat 1955:179): the cattle might follow the bison away; the bison might break down the cattle enclosures in the winter to get at their hay; the hay meadows, which served both cattle and bison, might become exhausted. While the farm was short of labor, the farms around the schools and hospitals "...were growing capable of supplying local needs" (ibid.). The St. Bruno farm was therefore abandoned, and the mission asked for bison meat to replace beef for its missions (ibid.; cf. Leising 1959:69-70 for a description of the farm).

[9] Curiously, this memo suggests that bison which had wandered out of the park should be shot:

> It seems impossible to get them back and, as they might become a nuisance and might cause some damage, the only satisfactory solution is to destroy them, using the meat for the Indians, schools, hospitals, etc., and the best of the hides sent here for disposal by the Department [memo from ? to W. W. Cory, 25 Oct. 1928, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 1A].

This proposal directly contradicts the view commonly advanced in correspondence of park administrators that the park, by conserving game, would act as a reservoir which would spill game over its boundaries for the benefit of hunters and trappers outside them.

[10] It is not clear from the files why O. S. Finnie and his Northwest Territories and the Yukon Branch of the Department of the Interior would be asked to approve a reserve which was to be located solely in Alberta, unless the Department of Indian Affairs were

considering seriously Finnie's request to relocate all the park Indians to this reserve.

[11] Surprisingly, although the Indians involved were charged and fined (\$15.00 per charge and costs [GA Charges and Convictions in Fort Chipewyan 1931]), no one lost park access as a further consequence. Perhaps the park officials blamed the situation on the traders.

[12] Peter Baker, a Lebanese free trader located at Fort Smith, writes in his memoirs about fighting the restriction on tripping in the NWT in September, 1926. He presented his case to Minister of the Interior Charles Stewart. He was told that the new rule was necessary because of "'...those damned Syrians and Jews going around fooling the poor Indians!'" (1976:192).

[13] These locations worked to the disadvantage of some traders initially:

> ...certain traders in the Wood Buffalo Park established their posts during the winter of 1934-35 at locations which were covered with water during the period of the spring floods [memo from J. Lorne Turner to J. M. Wardle, 8 Jan. 1936, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7870].

These traders applied for and obtained new locations for the following trapping season.

[14] In 1928, O. S. Finnie had been willing to make an exception for the mission staff:

> Following a strict interpretion of P.C. 1444, rather than the spirit of it, it is doubtful if we could permit new employees of the mission to hunt and trap within the new area. Nevertheless, for the purpose of Administration and consistent with the promise made at the time this area was included in the Park, it has been decided until otherwise instructed that authority be given you to issue permits for the same number of employees engaged by the mission as had formerly enjoyed these priviledges [sic] [letter from O.S. Finnie to J. A. McDougal, 5 April 1928, Archives of the OMI].

The mission had been issued permits free of charge to allow it "...to minister to the sick and dying Indians, and also in order to secure the fuel and hay needed for our charitable institutions" (letter from ? to A. L. Cumming, 5 Jan. 1935, Archives of the OMI). In 1934, it appears that the mission was asked to pay for these permits, which it refused to do on the grounds that its members were not engaged in hunting and trapping (ibid.). It was subsequently granted special permits to enter the park to visit "...the sick and dying of their faith" and to cut wood (memo from A. L. Cumming to park wardens, 21 Jan. 1935, Archives of the OMI). It is particularly interesting that even at this late date the park administration was willing to bend its rules for the mission, but not for Native trappers who had been raised in the park. By 1939 the mission had changed its mind about hunting and trapping, and permits for that purpose were granted to Father Picard and Brothers Crenn and Sarreault for the 1939-40 season (letter from M. Meikle to Father Picard, 30 Aug. 1939, Archives of the OMI).

[15] The increasing use of airplanes by both prospectors and trappers also affected the game and fur situation. Fort Chiepwyan residents complained in 1932 about the negative impact of airplanes:

> ...since the areoplanes are operating in the North the wild birds have become more scarce on the frequented routes, because as soon as an areoplane roars over them, wild birds in the swamps become so scared that they fly away immediately to some hidden feeding grounds, where it is impossible to reach them [letter from A. Victor Mercrédi to John A. McDougal, 29 Nov. 1932, F. A. Brady Papers, file for 1931-2 correspondence, Glenbow Archives, courtesy of Theresa Ferguson].

Fumoleau notes that some White trappers had increased their productivity by using airplane transportation (1975:297-8). It was enough of a threat in the park that steps were taken to ensure that pilots did not bring trappers into the park without permission (notice from W. L.

Brintness, Mackenzie Air Service Ltd., Edm., to pilots, 6 May 1940; various correspondence; all in PAC RG 85 v. 913 file 10900).

Finnie suggested that the increase in northern prospecting and airflights was a major cause of a substantial increase in bush fires in the 1930s, as a result of prospectors throwing their cigarette butts from plane windows. The prospectors may have set these fires deliberately to facilitate prospecting (cf. Finnie 1942; Missions de la Congrégation des Missionaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée 1936:62-63).

CHAPTER 5

CRISIS YEARS 1939 TO 1948

This decade was a transition period for both the Fort Chipewyan peoples and for Canada as a nation. Events relating to the Canadian and U.S. war effort had both immediate and long term impacts locally. Of greater consequence during these years for the hunters and trappers of the Fort Chipewyan region were the continued decline in the number of game and fur bearing animals and the introduction of new regulations which restricted access to these populations for both Native and non-Native hunters. This chapter discusses both the war-time economic boom and the critical blows dealt to the Native and fur trade economies by regulatory developments.

The war years and the immediate post-war period were economically advantageous for Canada. They saw the end of British supremacy over Canadian affairs and the incorporation of Canada into the U.S. sphere of economic, political, social, and military influence. Canada entered the war in 1939, still recovering from the Depression. It put the Canadian economy on a new course, under the political leadership of Mackenzie King and the economic leadership of C. D. Howe, the Minister of Munitions and Supply. Howe established Crown corporations and encouraged the growth of Canadian industries to supply the war effort (Leo Johnson 1972:171; Creighton 1976; 1972). He supported close cooperation between government and business leaders. By 1941, production had increased dramatically. Creighton says,

> It was this vast expansion of manufacturing that started Canada on a career of economic prosperity which was to last, with only brief and not very serious interruptions, for over thirty years [1976:48].

The war economy advanced the final transformation of the Canadian economy to a fully capitalist mode, and most Canadian labor in the south was absorbed into "...advanced modes of industrial capitalist production" (Leo Johnson 1972:171). Many Canadian industries were owned or controlled by U.S. corporations.

The war effort and the strategic importance of northwestern Canada led to development projects which affected the Fort Chipewyan region. These were the Canol project, the development of river and air transport, northern mining, and commercial fishing, The federal government introduced a new social welfare program, the family allowance scheme. On one level - sheer scale of investment - these projects were a break from the past. On another, they continued the processes of government and business expansion which had begun in the previous two decades.

While the war led to national prosperity, the Native peoples of the Fort Chipewyan region continued to face major economic difficulties, in spite of the brief Canol boom. These difficulties came from two causes, the introduction of new trapping regulations establishing individual traplines and the continuing decline of crucial animal populations.

These regulations were the culmination of government efforts in the 1920s and 1930s to restrict the access to traditional, bush resources for both Native and non-Native peoples. Both federal and provincial governments thought that animal resources, as any natural resource, should be "owned" individually and managed by persons licenced by the government to do so. They believed that only in this way could the animals be conserved and made available for exploitation. It is surprising that individual traplines were not introduced earlier, especially since many White trappers had requested them, and local government officials supported the idea. For the province outside the park, the problems involved setting up such lines and allocating them to competing White and Native trappers. While Native trappers had suffered from this competition, the province felt responsible only for the White and Métis trappers. Moreover, in the absence of a sophisticated game management program, the provincial government may have believed that there was enough fur for all trappers willing to work hard for it in the northern "wilderness." The obvious depletion of game by the mid 1930s led them to changes in this view, and the provincial game officials began planning a system of registered traplines which was introduced early in the 1940s.

This new situation created serious problems for Indians who had been evicted from the park for infractions of game regulations. The result was that the park Chipewyans relinquished their treaty status as Chipewyan Indians and became members of the Cree band legally, and the Cree band renewed its efforts to obtain a reserve within the park boundaries.

The park officials lagged almost a decade behind the province in introducing new restrictions on trapping areas, for several reasons. First, the majority of park trappers were Indians who resisted any restrictions on their movements and who had been promised in 1926 that none would be imposed. Secondly, the establishment of registered trapping areas would have institutionalized an activity which the park personnel hoped would eventually be banned completely. Finally, animal population sizes remained larger in the park in contrast to populations outside its boundaries until the early and mid 1940s. Registered trapping areas were introduced at the end of this period, in 1949.

The continuing decline of the animal resource base and the difficulties which this situation created for the Native peoples who relied on them must be discussed. The wartime economic boom was not a remedy; it was brief, and Natives received few benefits. However, it contributed to inflation and higher prices for goods at a time when animal populations were declining seriously. The result was hardship and even destitution for many Natives, despite changes in their trapping pattern and despite provincial and federal game management programs. This situation undermined the fur trade mode of production, and Indians were forced to rely more heavily on the meager social assistance which the Indian Agent could provide. These difficulties generated an economic crisis which would not be resolved until the post-war era.

THE WAR YEARS

The Strategic Northwest

World War II initially hurt the northern economy. Mines closed, and the tonnage shipped by river transport dropped substantially. Fort McMurray's economy slumped (W. B. Hunter 1971:237; Wuetherick 1973:A142; MacGregor 1974:165). Most White trappers left the north by 1942 (Jarvenpa 1977:81). Government appropriations for Wood Buffalo Park declined, forcing the termination of the muskrat conservation project in the park (cf. Lothian 1977:18).

This downward trend reversed with the launching of two megaprojects by the United States: the Alaska Highway and the Canol pipeline. The Alaska Highway was to link Alaska with the United States through British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. The Canol was an oil pipeline from Norman Wells, NWT, to the Alaska Highway to provide fuel for trucks. The Highway had been proposed for many years (cf. McCormack 1980:170); in 1938 King opposed it:

> "...public policy would not permit using the funds of a foreign Government to construct public works in Canada. It would be...a matter of financial invasion...or financial penetration" [cited in Laxer 1973b:34].

When the war began, northwestern Canada became important stategically, and the U.S.

> ...took the initiative and forced the pace. The heavy weight of presidential command or army pressure was applied whenever necessary; and Canada's doubts or practical objections were brushed casually aside as the obstinate cavillings of a jealous "little brother" [Creighton 1976:72-3].

A Permanent Joint Board of Defense was created on August 17, 1940, with Canada and the U.S. represented equally (Creighton 1976:67; Laxer 1973b: 34). Laxer contends that the establishment of this board "...marked the political transition of Canada into the American empire" (1973b:34).

Despite an appearance of mutual decision-making, the U.S. proceeded to plan for Alaska and northern Canada unilaterally. This included a transportation corridor which passed through the Fort Chipewyan region. Diubaldo discusses U.S. ignorance about the Norman Wells oil which allowed it to decide to proceed with the pipeline project (1977: 180-2), as well as the U.S.' disregard of Canadian sovereignty: the project and contracts had been approved in the U.S. before Canada was even notified that it was under consideration (Diubaldo 1977:182; Creighton 1976:73). This indifference to Canadian sentiment continued for the duration of the project. The U.S. Army, calling itself the

Army of Occupation, built a series of airstrips and roads not authorized by Canadian authority and without considering local needs (one of these was the airstrip at Embarras). The U.S. Army conducted its own explorations (Diubaldo 1977:183-4; Creighton 1976:73). The U.S. made decisions and informed Canada afterward. Worse yet, Canada, according to Diubaldo, was "...oblivious to the long-range problems such activities could create" (1977:183).

These involved not only the political considerations suggested above, but economic ones as well. While the war effort required certain developments whether or not profits would be realized, U.S. corporate interests were giving thought to the post-war possibilities of the Canol project. It was the British High Commissioner to Canada, Malcolm MacDonald, who informed King in 1943 of these dangers in a memo which claimed that the U.S. was acting as if it did not intend to leave northern Canada after the war and that it was making decisions that would benefit the U.S. economy:

> "The Americans decide these things according to what they consider American interests. They pay no particular heed to this or that Canadian national or local interest. This aspect of the matter assumes even greater importance when one realizes fully the considerations which the American Army, and the other American interests working with them, have in mind in all their efforts in the North-West. Responsible American officers will tell you frankly in confidence that in addition to building works to be of value in this war, they are designing those works also to be of particular value for (a) commercial aviation and transport after the war and (b) waging war against the Russians in the next world crisis.
>
> "...With the same considerations in view the Americans are pushing ahead with...the building of oil pipe-lines...The Americans are very alive to this and the possibility that further prospecting may reveal an oil field of considerable importance in the Mackenzie valley. American oil interests are watching the situation closely, and if developments look good they will seek to gain control there...(C)ertainly many influential American individuals who have had a hand in

> these developments in the North-west have no serious thought that the interests they represent shall withdraw..." [cited in Diubaldo 1977:184].

In 1943, before the pipeline had been completed, the U.S. sought to protect its investment by pressuring Canada to re-negotiate the war-time agreements (Diubaldo 1977:185-7). Canada decided to buy out the U.S. investment, fearful that Canada would otherwise "'...be committed to the consequences of future United States' Policy'" (*ibid*.:186). As part of this process, Canada was forced to provide Imperial Oil, which held the contracts at Norman Wells, with "substantial incentives," including reduced royalty payments (*ibid*.:188). The various negotiations were concluded in 1944, and "...Canada had removed any hint of U.S. control or ownership over the resource in the postwar world" (*ibid*.), at least for the next few years. In the meantime, in the winter of 1944-45 the changing wartime circumstances led the U.S. Army to decide that it no longer needed Canol oil, and the U.S. was allowed to withdraw from the project. Canada then announced that the operation was to be abandoned, to the distress of the U.S. (*ibid*.:189-190).[1] While the oil reserves at Norman Wells were not large, Canada feared that a fully-operational installation might be a liability to Canada in the event of post-war hostilities. The end of the Canol project meant an end to the economic boom in the Fort Chipewyan region.

The Northern Boom

The economic growth which the war and the Canol project brought to the Fort Chipewyan and adjacent regions was considerable. 40,000 tons of supplies and equipment were shipped from Waterways to Fort Norman (Ken Tingley, per. commun. 1978). In 1943, there was 140 per cent more northbound traffic than in 1941 (Mackinnon 1980:31). About

3,000 men, divided in racially segregated camps, came down the first summer to handle equipment and construct facilities (Leising 1959:82; Parker 1979; McConnell 1965:118).[2] The local transport industry could not meet this massive demand, and there was an urgent need for more river craft and personnel to man them. Scores of northerners, Native and non-Native were hired, with their boats when possible, to act as pilots and deckhands (Schlader 1978; field journals 1977; 1978), and the army brought in its own prefabricated barges (Mackinnon 1980:31).

Boom conditions were intensified by mining developments during the war, particularly the new interest in uranium. The northern mines which had closed at the start of the war were re-opened, and there was another invasion by prospectors (Leising 1959:88; Schlader 1978; Phillips 1967:153; McConnell 1965:118-9). In 1944, the federal government expropriated Eldorado Gold Mines Ltd., acquiring the Northern Transportation Company (NTCo) at that time. NTCo, already one of the two major river transport companies, was turned into a Crown corporation and provided transportation at low cost (McConnell 1965:129). By the end of the war, NTCo was handling more freight than its competitor, the HBC's Mackenzie River Transport (Rea 1968:218; Mackinnon 1980:31). When the war ended, much of the equipment was sold locally (Parker 1980:33), boosting local transport industries, especially NTCo, which Schlader claims got most of it at cost (1978). After the war, NTCo would dominate the Athabasca and Mackenzie River transportation business (Rea 1968:218, 249; Mackinnon 1980: 31-2). Mackenzie River Transport ceased to be a common carrier in 1947, and it was terminated in 1957 (Schlader 1978; Mackinnon 1980:32).

At least some local Natives took advantage of the economic boom. It provided work which paid well at a time when trapping was inadequate as a means of generating income. Leising commented that when the soldiers arrived, the Indians "...all wanted to work for the Army and quit trapping" (1959:86). Similarly, with the resurgence of mining activity, "the Indians left their traps hanging on trees, packed their duffel bags and tents, and became the trail blazers and guides" (*ibid*.:88). There are no figures available on the number of local people who found such employment. It was likely mostly summer work, as most wage labor had been in the past. Natives who worked for the army or for mining projects had increased incomes with which tocope with the rising prices of store goods. Once the boom ended, however, local opportunities for wage labor disappeared, while store prices remained at high levels, fueled by post-war inflation.

There were three major consequences of the boom for the region. The first was that the local levels of employment and income increased (cf. Rea 1968:310). The (average?) wage before the boom was only $45 per week. The army doubled that wage (Parker 1980:33). In Fort McMurray, women could make as much as $25 per week doing laundry (*ibid*.). The local transport companies were forced to raise the wages they paid (Parker 1979). It was beginning of inflation in the region.

Secondly, the transportation industry was modernized overnight, with relatively little cost to local people or the industry. Between the spring of 1942 and October, 1943, the Canol project "...had constructed more transportation facilities than had been constructed in the history of the Mackenzie" (McConnell 1965:118). Leising concluded that

> ...its secondary effect - the very fact that it broke into the isolation of the North with the modern air, river, and highway transportation - has changed not only the people but the face and pace of the entire country [1942:83].

Schlader concurs, crediting the Americans who "...really opened up the river. That's when it [development] really took off" (1978).

Finally, Natives experienced a brief prosperity which drew them closer to the wage-labor economy and showed them some of its advantages as a source of income. While the end of the boom left them in worse economic straits, their experience may have made them more receptive to the economic developments which would begin in the region in 1948.

Commercial Fishing

The other local activity which benefited from the war was commercial fishing. During the war, McInnes' operation on Lake Athabasca intensified. In 1942-43, McInnes had a filleting operation near Fort Chipewyan. Part of its labor force was a group of Japanese internees, which resulted in the renaming of the channel where the camp was located to "Tokyo Snye" (Schlader 1978). When they had finished fishing at the west end of the lake, they moved up the lake to Crackingstone Point, 80 miles away, the location of their other main camp. Howdever, after sixteen years of fishing on the lake, the fish stocks declined: "Lake Athabasca started to go on a downswing, especially trout, in '42, '43. It got harder to get" (ibid.). Fishing moved further east to the Fond du Lac area, where local Chipewyan Indians complained that McInnes was taking all their dog food.

The fish populations in Great Slave Lake were investigated by D. S. Rawon, who conducted studies there from 1944 to 1947 (Rawson 1951). Rawson informed William Schlader of the "big bonanza" at Great Slave Lake (Schlader 1978). In 1945, McInnes decided to split its outfit, sending a part to Great Slave Lake, financing this new venture with money from U.S. owned General Foods. Schlader's description of the operation is reminiscent of the early commercial fishery on Lake Athabasca:

> We were the only ones in there, and did we ever run into fish down there. We had the lake virtually to ourselves for three to four years, until Mackenzie Highway was opened up, and then everybody flocked in [1978].

The operation changed from a processing, freezing operation to a fresh-water operation, to export fish which did not have to be processed.

1945 was the last year that McInnes attempted to fish Lake Athabasca. The company was in dispute with the Saskatchewan government over mesh size; local Indians were upset with company activities; and, most importantly, the fishing was poor compared with conditions found in Great Slave Lake. They would return to Lake Athabasca in the 1950s when fish stocks had recovered with the same type of operation as at Great Slave Lake. As well, they would begin fishing for goldeye in Lake Claire in the park in 1948. These developments are discussed in chapter 7.

Changes in Government Responsibilities

Creighton has concluded that World War II affected Canadian life more than the first world war did. The federal government became stronger as it took control of all tax revenues and implemented a progressive income tax "...in order to collect the hugh revenues necessary for national purposes on a large scale" (Creighton 1976:78). These purposes, or goals and responsibilities of government, had begun to change in definition during the Depression, although there had been no money to fund new government programs at that time. Canada had responded to the Depression by a new

> ...belief that self-reliance, personal responsibility, and free enterprise were not enough in themselves, and that collective action could and should create a far more stable and equitable society [Creighton 1976:78].

Many of the reforms suggested by the prairie socialists were adopted by the major political parties, and even Mackenzie King came to believe in "...the cause of social security..." (ibid.:81; cf. Creighton 1972:552). Now in the 1940s, "the war had legitimized state planning" (Creighton 1976:103).

During the war, federal planners were already trying to anticipate the needs of post-war Canada. They were fearful of a post-war depression, similar to the one which followed World War I, and they thought it could be avoided by providing

> "...high and stable employment and income, and a greater sense of public responsibility for individual economic security and welfare" [cited in Creighton 1976:107].

The Canadian government planned to accomplish these goals by abandoning its pre-war laissez-faire stance and institutionalizing the notion of state planning in economic and social spheres, regulating the economy in accord with the tenets of Keynesian economics (cf. inter alia Creighton 1976:106-7). The result was that in 1945,

> ...the federal government had presented itself as a kind of twentieth century benevolent despot, an all-embracing, enlightened and benign authority which would maintain high employment, regulate public investment and construction, promote public health and provide social security at uniform levels throughout the nation [Creighton 1976:262].

Specifically, it would assist private enterprise to maintain high employment and promote consumption by distributing purchasing power through the poorer levels of the population through various social assistance programs (Creighton 1976:106-7,175; Morton 1972:488). Both economic and social needs would be met with the same programs. These social assistance programs were begun during the war years. Unemployment insurance was introduced in 1941, and family allowances, in 1944.[3]

Family Allowances

The Family Allowance program was the first major social welfare scheme which was extended to status Indians. It is of considerable importance in the anthropological literature for its impact on northern Indians, so a few of its more important provisions are summarized here. The Family Allowance Act provided for payments for all children in Canada up to sixteen years of age, varying from $5-8 per month per child, depending on the child's age. Families with over four children received a reduced amount, presumably to alleviate fears that the taxpayers were subsidizing a high birth rate in Quebec. The allowance was payable on behalf of schoolage children as long as they were in school or receiving an equivalent education. Only in the NWT was there provision for Eskimo and "Nomad" children to receive the family allowance if they received instruction from their parents according to prevailing Native custom. This provision was dropped by 1949 (cf. McCormack 1976; Family Allowance Regulations 1945:3715).

Unless there were exceptional circumstances, it was the mother who received the payments on behalf of her children. One such exception was the situation of status Indian children who attended residential schools. Federal allowances were discontinued for these children on the grounds that the federal government was providing a per capita payment to the school on behalf on each child, and it was therefore assumed to be supporting or "maintaining" the child. However, the family allowance was not itself turned over to the school, which received funding through a different channel; it was simply discontinued (field journals 1977; 1978; Dahl 1976).

The Act and Regulations together define a formal structure which was extended to all Canadians, with some special provisions for status Indians. Family allowances were paid in three ways to Indians, depending on their circumstances: payment could be made directly by voucher or cheque to the parents (or sometimes mailed care of the agency); it could be paid to an Indian Agency Trust Account; or it could be paid "in kind"; that is, by issuing commodities to the amount of the payment (Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons [SJC] 1946:22; Dahl 1976). There was a list of authorized articles that could be issued for family allowance payments (SJC 1946:289). The program was administered for Indians by the Department of Mines and Resources, which contained the Indian Affairs Branch, on behalf of the Department of National Health and Welfare, which had the overall responsibility for the program. The Indian Agent was usually the immediate supervisor and administrator of the provisions for status Indians. In northern communities, it was often the RCMP who distributed family allowances to non-status persons. The Act provided a structure within which the local administrator had considerable discretion over the form of payment and the disposition of family allowance funds: he decided whether payment was to be in cash (cheque) or in kind, whether vouchers or purchase orders would be given, and possibly where allowances could be spent (if there were a choice of stores). Indian purchases were restricted by the authorized list of items and by requiring that these purchases be approved (Dahl 1976). The Indian Agent or other administrator registered children and decided that certain children were no longer eligible for benefits.

The Family Allowance Act's education provisions were based on two different ordinances in Alberta: the School Ordinance of the Province of Alberta, which applied to Métis and non-status children, and the education sections of the Indian Act, which applied to status

Indians. While the Indian Act has always provided for compulsory schooling, in the north compulsory attendance was not required until the 1950s (Carney 1971:293-4), partly because of limited school facilities, perhaps because of the economic usefulness of the child to his family in the bush, and because of the belief that Indians in the north were better off without a lot of "interference." There is no good evidence to indicate whether or not status Indians living in the bush in the Fort Chipewyan region did in fact receive family allowances if they did not send their children to school. The major local impacts of family allowances and compulsory schooling are discussed in some detail in chapter 8, while the initial impact of this new income supplement is considered in this and the next chapters.

THE 1940s: THE FORT CHIPEWYAN FUR TRADE ECONOMY - ALBERTA

In many ways, the developments in the park and in non-park Alberta during the 1940s were removed from the war-related activities. Both the federal and provincial governments continued to regulate the natural resources on which Native peoples relied, and the fur trade economy continued to deteriorate, continuing trends which had begun in the previous two decades.

Registered Traplines

In 1940, Alberta began introducing registered trapping areas in portions of the province. A provincial report for the year 1941-42 reads,

> At the commencement of the year 1941-42 it was decided, as a measure of conservation, that a large portion of the fur bearing part of the province should be organized under a system of trap line and trapping area registrations [Dept.

of Lands and Mines Alta. 1943:64].

The report noted that trapping areas had been registered in forest reserves in the province since about 1924, which resulted in conservation of game and reduction in fires. The government hoped for similar benefits in other areas in the province. There was to be a transition period of two years, during which general trapping licences would still be issued (ibid.; Dept. of Lands and Mines Alta. 1944:14, 66). To obtain a registered trapline, an applicant had to meet a residency requirement. Individuals with access to Wood Buffalo Park were not considered eligible for Alberta trapping permits under this regulation, nor could they become partners with an Alberta registered trapper, even if he were a close relative (see discussion below).

In 1944-45, Alberta decided to charge status Indians a fee for trapping permits, which had been issued free in the past. This earlier policy was changed because

> ...it was considered that the Indian should be required to pay his way along with the other trappers in view of the fact that both could obtain the same revenue for the production of fur [Dept. of Lands and Mines Alta. 1946:90].

Indian Affairs paid the fee to the province on behalf of the status Indians (ibid.).

The government anticipated an eventual increase in the number of lines available, as it expected that the practice of fur conservation would increase the productivity of each line (Dept. of Lands and Mines Alta. 1947:72). However, such adjustments were never made on these grounds. The report does not state what the optimum amount of fur production was considered to be. The "fiscal carrying capacity" of each trapping area would vary from year to year according to the prices of furs and the amount of fur (field journal 1977 VI:11), and it declined following 1948, when fur prices dropped drastically.[4]

The well-beingof the trapper and his family depended on the quality of his trapline. For instance, Leising described the plight of Charlie Drygeese,

> ...a poor fellow but he is a good honest man. His trapline is not in the best location, and I'm working with the game warden to extend it a little for next year [1959:53].

Indians in the Fort Chipewyan region outside the park worried about the possible negative impact of registered traplines. A letter written by Napoleon Laviolette, a Chipewyan Indian, explained their concerns:

> "There is a rumor going around here that I am going to loose [*sic*] my lease land, (Registered trapping ground). I was born in Chipewyan, and I am now fourty [*sic*] nine years old; and I have been trapping here all my life. And there is a lot of white men around here which drove the Indians out of their trapping marches [*sic*] by threatening them. As I do not see why we people that was born and raised at Chipewyan should be chased out of our own trapping rights, I think that we should have the privilage [*sic*] of trapping before the white people, as we have no other means of making our living. If the white people takes all the ground the Government will have to keep all the Indians, as there is no other way we can make a living" [cited in letter from Chancellor (?) to Dr. H. W. McGill, IAB, 18 Jan. 1940, Archives of the OMI].

Breynat acted as the intermediary for Laviolette and the other Indians at Fort Chipewyan. He vouched for the accuracy of their complaints (*ibid*.), and he forwarded Laviolette's letter to the Alberta Department of Agriculture, which in 1940 had jurisdiction over wildlife.

The Minister of the Department assured Breynat that as registered traplines were being introduced north of the 25th baseline,

> ...steps are being taken to ensure that no injury or hardship will be inflicted upon any resident of that area. In fact, the new regulations with regard to residency qualifications are much stricter than heretofore [letter from D. B. Mullen to Archbishop Breynat, 1 Feb. 1940, Archives of the OMI].

The traplines were expected to protect "to a great extent" those individuals who were resident in "the closed area of Chipewyan" and of Fort Vermilion (ibid.). Further correspondence revealed that the government was considering "...the establishment of a community rat-trapping area" at Fort Chipewyan, as it had at Fort Vermilion. Applications for traplines from the Fort Chipewyan district were being held until that decision had been made (letter from W. H. Wallace, Fish and Game Comm., Alta., to Breynat, 3 Feb. 1940, Archives of the OMI).

This community trapping area was never designated, and by April traplines were being allocated to applicants. This process led to further complaint. Breynat informed the provincial Game Commissioner,

> When visiting Fort Chipewyan, I was surprised of [sic] the number of complaints made regarding the attribution of trap lines. It seems that your representative at that post [the Game Guardian] has perhaps favored too much some of his friends and this to the detriment of the Indians [letter from Breynat to W. H. Wallace, 17 April 1940, Archives of the OMI].

Wallace replied,

> ...you have been wrongly informed with regard to the issuance of permits for registered trap-lines in the Chipewyan area.
>
> This Government is extremely anxious that these permits be issued in a fair and just manner. There is no discrimination shown between the Indian, Half-breed or white man, and our salaried Game Guardians at Fort Fitzgerald, Embarras and Sergeant Rathbone of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at Chipewyan, have been instructed accordingly. Every application turned into these officers is sent here with a report explaining the case, and is carefully scrutinized and weighed before any certificate of registration is issued [letter from Wallace to Breynat, 24 April 1940, Archives of the OMI].

Breynat argued that a problem did exist at Fort Chipewyan despite these precautions, and that "...the parties from whom I received these complaints...were...people of good standing and serious character, not only indians but whites and also missionaries," who believed that the RCMP officer was not consulted as often as he should be in the matter (letter from Breynat to Wallace, 11 May 1940, Archives of the OMI). Many non-Native trappers obtained traplines; one of the sources of Native complaint may have been the fact that the province was not discriminating in their favor, especially if, as Russell suggests, they tried to obtain a "block" of neighboring traplines which could allow them to trap as if it were a communal area (Bill Russell 1981:26). Further research on this transitional period is required to clarify exactly how traplines were allocated.

Fur and Game Production

The new regulatory system did not halt the decline in numbers of game immediately, however. Some of the factors responsible, such as drought and natural animal cycling, had to be remedied naturally. The overtrapping which had occurred earlier meant that animal populations would recover slowly even when environmental conditions were optimum. Indians from the park were still allowed to hunt for food in Alberta, to the indignation of Alberta trapline holders who did not have reciprocal rights in the park (see discussion below).

The Annual Reports of the Alberta Department of Lands and Mines include figures for fur production and its value for the entire province. These are listed in table 5 and graphed in figure 6 for the period from 1941 to 1951. They show the 1941-42 season to be the last one in which fur production was high, although income did not drop substantially until later in the decade. The slight rise in income at the end of the decade did not represent a significant rise in real worth, because of the influence of post-war inflation. In fact, real value declined.

Table 5

Fur Production in Alberta 1941-1951

Season	Number of Pelts	Cash Value of Pelts	Average Value Per Pelt
1941-42	11,713,686	$5,162,635.73	$ .44
1942-43	2,468,306	5,067,172.18	2.05
1943-44	1,513,927	4,686,505.62	3.09
1944-45	1,696,140	2,048,063.27	1.21
1945-46	1,411,571	3,002,418.00	2.13
1946-47	1,695,936	1,566,308.35	.92
1947-48	1,968,497	2,781,991.07	1.41
1948-49	2,639,971	1,926,783.50	.73
1949-50	2,054,335	1,888,917.99	.92
1950-51	1,742,673	2,530,978.32	1.45

(Figures taken from Alberta Dept. of Lands and Mines Annual Reports for 1942-1952)

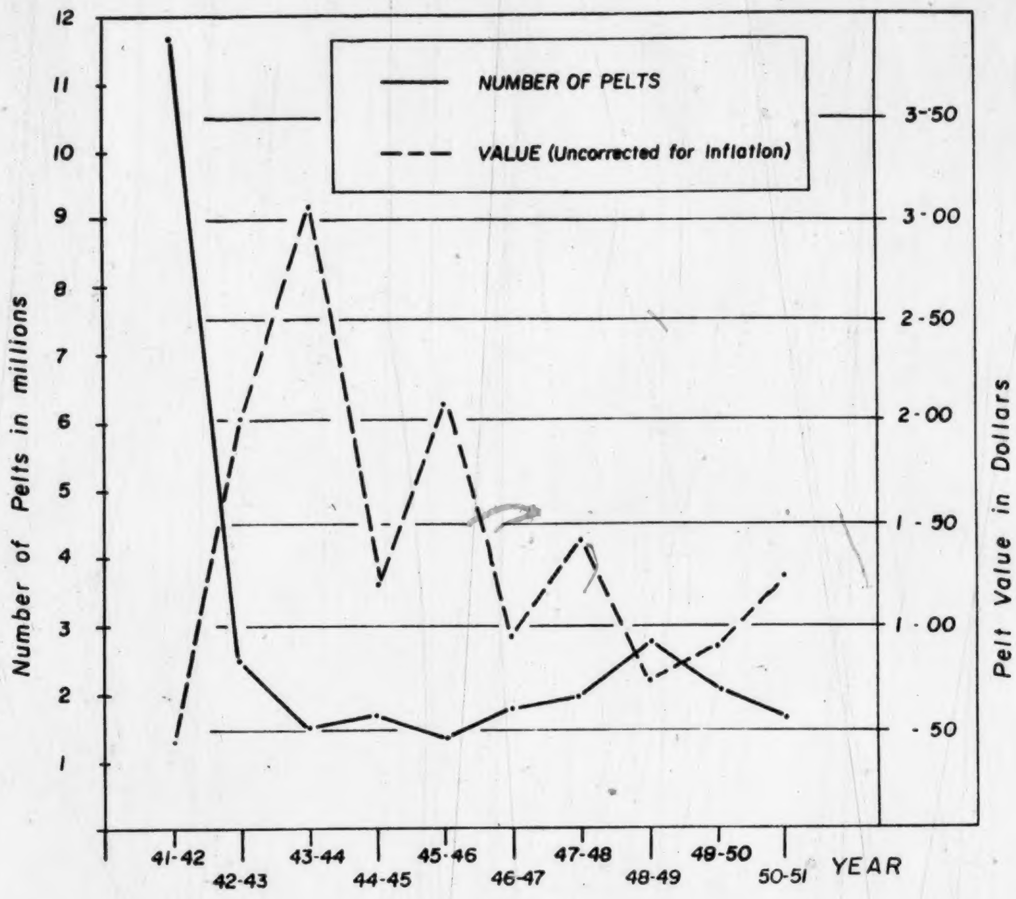

Figure 6. Fur Production and its Value 1941-1951

Information on the situation in Fort Chipewyan is found in the Indian Agents' Daily Journals for the 1940s. Dr. Melling reported that the trapping was poor in the fall of 1943 (PAA Melling 1943). In 1944, the new Indian Agent Jack Stewart was providing rations to the Indians on the reserve (PAA Stewart 15 Sept. 1944), although it is not clear if these were meant only for old people or for all the members of the reserve community. In practice, food was shared among all co-residents. Trapping did not improve that fall. On December 15, Stewart wrote, "There is practically no water anywhere there [on the reserve] and no rats" (PAA Stewart 15 Dec. 1944). The Game Guardian informed him that muskrats were "...fairly plentiful" where trappers had done some development work on their lines, but other furs were "...none too plentiful in any district he has travelled through so far" (ibid. 17 Dec. 1944). Indians faced another constraint: the decline of fur meant that they were unable to obtain credit "...on the same scale as before" (ibid. 7 Oct. 1944), although they needed this credit in order to obtain their fall trapping outfits. In February of 1945 at Fort Fitzgerald, Stewart observed that "Fur...is very scarce but all the Indians are out hunting and doing their best" (ibid. 20 Feb. 1945). Indeed, with the pipeline boom over, they had no other option. Caribou were common in the region in the mid 1940s, which meant that families had meat, if not fur (ibid. 23 Feb. 1945; C. W. Robson, Ft. Chip. RCMP Detachment, "Game Conditions general Fort Chipewyan District. Especially regarding caribou," 20 Feb. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). Alberta closed the beaver season that spring, which "...makes it very awkward for the Indians in the unsettled areas. They will be unable to procure work before June and not all of them even then, not enough work being available" (PAA Stewart 29 March 1945).

In April, some Indians joined a trappers' union against Stewart's advice, perhaps hoping that it would help them improve their situation (PAA Stewart 3 April 1945).[5] One issue the union may have tackled was benefits to local trappers from fur royalties, which amounted to about five per cent when first imposed on October 1, 1944, but which increased in proportion as the value of furs declined (letter from R. A. Gibson to H. W. McGill, Director IAB, 25 Sept. 1944; memo from J. L. Grew, Fur Supervisor, 12 Jan. 1945; both in PAC RG 10 v. 6732 file 420-1-5-3). Fur royalties were provincial revenues derived from the trappers which assisted sport hunting, not subsistence hunting and trapping:

> If the money received from royalties by the various game administration were ploughed back into fur conservation and the supervision of trapping and trading, I do not think such a tax would be out of order. It is questionable, however, whether this procedure has been followed and probably a considerable portion of the revenue received from royalties went into the building of game fish hatcheries, the propagation of game birds, the establishment of annual field trials and other activities sponsored by the fish and game associations and which benefited the trapper not at all. I understand the Alberta Game and Fish Association has been pressing for some time past and was largely instrumental in having them raised to the present rates [memo from J. L. Grew, Fur Supervisor, 12 Jan. 1945, PAC RG 10 v. 6732 file 420-1-5-3].

Economic Options

1944 and 1945 stand out as the years when Indians were forced into wage labor because the land would no longer support them. Jobs were usually obtained through the Indian Agent. For instance, in July, 1944, Stewart recruited eighteen Indians from the two bands who were "...willing to go to work in the harvest fields of Southern Alberta." Stewart saw this job as "...a good experience for these young men" (PAA Stewart 6 July 1944). In April, 1945, he tried to arrange for two Chipewyan men to go on a surveying job to Yellowknife (*ibid*. 18 April

1945). When he visited the Chipewyan reserve in September, 1945, he noted that "the people here are living on straight fish. Most of the men are away working" (ibid. 13 Sept. 1945). What these jobs were and how much money found its way back to Fort Chipewyan are not indicated. He wrote, "The Indians are now very hard up in this district. Traders are giving out very little debt" (ibid. 18 Aug. 1945; cf. also 24 Sept. 1945). "Many of these Indians are having a hard time to provide for their families" (ibid. 6 Sept. 1945). Wage labor does not appear to have benefited the community materially. A more ready source of assistance was the newly introduced family allowance, which was issued in the form of vouchers redeemable for goods from the restricted list. Stewart administered this program for status Indians, and he tried to benefit people as much as possible: "Total credits are being issued to those only who live a long way out otherwise only part is being issued with hope of spreading it out as much as possible" (ibid. 13 Feb. 1946).

Furs continued to be poor through 1946, and Stewart "...advised the Indians to hunt Ermine squirrels and mink as these are the better priced fur and also the easiest to trap" (PAA Stewart 12 Nov. 1946). Neither ermine nor squirrel fetched a high price, however (Dept. of Lands and Mines Alta. 1948). He concluded at the end of the year that "...the Indian[s] have been better off, due to Family Allowance and also the slight increase in fur" (ibid. 31 Dec. 1946). As well, all Indians may have begun receiving rations at treaty time, a request they made the previous winter (ibid. 26 Dec. 1946; field journals 1977; 1978).

Caribou was closed to hunting in February, 1947, which worried the Indians, although Stewart felt that they had had ample opportunity to put up adequate meat supplies (PAA Stewart 25 Feb. 1947). The same year, Indian Affairs, the Province of Alberta, and Ducks Unlimited joined forces to study "...the possibility of a fur conservation scheme to the east of Wood Buffalo Park..." (memo from R. A. Gibson to M. Meikle, 17 Dec. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A).[6] Ducks Unlimited envisioned raising the levels of Lakes Claire, Mamawi, and Baril as part of this scheme (ibid.). Stewart was upset with publicity which resulted from its investigation, noting in his journal that a representative of the organization had apparently written an article for the Winnipeg Tribune in which he accused the delta Indians of organizing illegal bird hunts and killing birds simply "for the fun of it" in the spring and summer (PAA Stewart 29 March 1947). Although Indians probably did hunt waterfowl illegally, it was a traditional source of food made more necessary by the lack of food sources other than fish. On June 20, the Chipewyan band discussed these restrictions with Stewart, probably to request that they be relaxed or changed (ibid. 20 June 1947).

In January, 1948, family allowances were issued in cheques rather than vouchers for the first time (PAA Stewart 27 Jan. 1948), and Stewart advised the Indians not to "abuse" the system (ibid. 28 Jan. 1948). They were no longer limited to the goods on the restricted list. The fur trade appeared to be improving, too, with muskrats present in good numbers on the Chipewyan reserve for the first time since the 1939 drought (ibid. 17 Feb. 1948; cf. Fuller 1951a:55).

However, on April 6 Stewart reported, "It was found that market was anything but good [for furs;] prices dropping on many articles" (PAA Stewart 6 April 1948). That spring marked the real decline in the fur market. Many traders were unable to find markets for the furs which they had purchased from trappers during the winter (Dept. Lands and Mines

Alta. 1950:66; Dept. of Resources and Devel. 1950:32). The decline continued through 1949, when Stewart noted that "...prices are not so good and debts were heavy" (PAA Stewart 16 May 1949), even though Indians had had trouble getting credit the previous winter (ibid. 20 Oct. 1947). The province reported on "...a tremendous reduction in the prices obtained" for furs in the spring of 1949, despite increased fur production. For example, wild mink in Alberta had sold the previous year for an average price of $28.62; it sold now for $22.00. Beaver dropped from $31.80 to $19.00, and squirrel, from $ .69 to $ .25 (Dept. of Lands and Mines Alta. 1950:66), The consensus was that "the raw fur trade had a rather difficult year owing to the fluctuations and uncertainty in the price of new fur" (ibid. 1951:84). Hard times had been present for Indians outside the park for approximately three decades; they would continue into the post-war era.

WOOD BUFFALO PARK: CREES PRESS FOR THEIR RESERVE

Natives with access to the park faced new difficulties in the 1940s. All were confronted with dwindling fur and game populations, yet the threat of eviction for violation of park regulations was a serious one after Alberta introduced registered traplines outside the park. The remainder of this chapter explains these problems and the solutions proposed by both Natives and park officials. The section on declining resources also provides an explanation for this decline, identifying park regulations as the cause of many of the problems the park was then obliged to resolve.

The Threat of Eviction

Park Indians who were convicted of violating a game regulation could be evicted from the park, either temporarily or permanently, depending on the severity of their offense. The discussion in chapter 4 explained the hardships which this punishment imposed: game and fur were scarce outside the park; the trapper and his family had to work in an area with which they were not familiar; they were without the support of their usual kin group. However,

> ...before the registered trap-line area and trap-line system was in force in Alberta, these expelled Indians had little difficulty in finding new trapping grounds...[letter from J. Melling, Indian Agent, to Sec. IAB, 12 June 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

As well, they were free to join with other families to hunt and trap if they chose to do so.

These options disappeared when the province introduced registered traplines and restricted area regulations. The first problem was that all the good trapping lands and most marginal ones were quickly registered; there were few areas unclaimed:

> ...all decent trapping territory has been taken up and this fact has made the penalty of expulsion from the Park much more severe than it would have been two or three years ago, that is, particularly in the Chipewyan area...[letter from J. A. Urquhart to R. A. Gibson, 28 Feb. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Secondly, a trapper had to meet the residency requirement in order to obtain a Certificate of Registration or to become a partner of a trapper with a registered line. However, the province had ruled "...that no one who is a Park permittee is eligible for a trap line in Alberta..." (ibid.). A letter from Corporal Basler of the Fort Chipewyan RCMP shows how strictly the regulations were enforced:

> Amabe [sic] Spirit has just been in this office to ask whether it would be in order for his step son to trap on his (Spirit's) registered line.
>
> Regulations governing the Registration of Areas and Trap

> Line prohibit any person from trapping on a Registered Area of line unless he is the holder of the Certificate of Registration or as member of his immediate family under 21 years of age.
>
> In view of this I am not able to give this man the permission he requested and I do not see how it is possible for Fred Gibot to get a license outside the Park as he has not been a resident of the Chipewyan restricted Area for the past four years.
>
> Under the circumstances it is my opinion that Fred Gibot will not be able to trap until he gets back into the Park. I understand that his permit has been suspended for one year [letter from L. Basler, 1 Oct. 1942, to Dr. J. Melling, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Indian Agent Melling commented that "...Gibot is now in the position that, although being a Treaty Indian, he is unable to make his living in the country of his birth." Since he "...has no residency within that portion of Alberta known as the restricted area - this includes the area in and about Chipewyan," he cannot obtain "...one of the few remaining areas unregistered in this portion of Alberta" (letter from J. Melling to the Sec. IAB, 8 Oct. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). Three other men faced the same dilemma at that time (memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 28 Oct, 1942, PAC Rg 85 v. 889 file 9358). Melling advised the park administration that

> ...these families are in a destitute condition and it will be necessary to provide them with relief rations, unless they are able to carry on trapping this coming winter [ibid.].

Melling had raised this problem earlier with the federal government, informing his department in June, 1942, that he was issuing relief to five hunters who were then without hunting areas. He warned, "there is a danger that the issuing of relief is apt to be mistaken by these families as an easy way out of their problem..." and that expulsion from the park would no longer be "any great punishment" (letter from J. Melling to Sec. IAB, 12 June 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). Later, he suggested to Indian Affairs that it had an obligation to look after the hunting and trapping interests of the Indians, and he drew attention to a circular which Indian Affairs had distributed August 19, 1941:

> This letter states, "assures to them, of hunting, trapping and fishing, game and fish for food at all seasons." While the right to trap for fur might not be directly construed as "trapping for food" yet, in a general sense this Indian, or any other Indian, must trap for fur to at least partially provide himself with food [letter from J. Melling to Sec. IAB, 8 Oct. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

He queried, "Am I to issue full and adequate relief to these able-bodied men?" (ibid.).

Melling hoped that the park officials would relent and cancel these suspensions, but it was not willing to do so:

> The fact that the individuals concerned are Indians, and, therefore, dependent upon hunting and trapping for their livelihood, does, of course, complicate the situation but it is evident that violations of the regulations cannot go unpunished and, as stated, suspension or cancellation of privileges seems to be our only course [memo from Eric Druce, Ottawa, to Cumming, 11 Sept. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

The author of this memo suggested that these Indians might be allowed to hunt in the NWT as an alternative, which was apparently never done. The park administration did recognize that the conditions outside its boundaries made the punishment much worse than it would otherwise have been. When five men were charged in the illegal killing of several marten, Urquhart recommended leniency:

> In view of the existing conditions with regard to registered trap lines outside the Park I am hesitant to recommend the expulsion of the Treaty Indians from the Park [letter from J.A. Urquhart to R. A. Gibson, 28 Feb. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9358].

Instead, the two major culprits were fined $45 each and costs (ibid.) One of the men was to have his permit suspended for only one year, because to cancel it completely "...would render him and his family destitute" (letter from R. A. Gibson to J. A. Urquhart, 4 March 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 889 file 9358). Two men were to have their marten permits withheld for two years, and two were to have them withheld for one year. All involved were to be warned about the possibility of future suspension or cancellation for other offenses (ibid.).

The Indians from the park were understandably worried and upset about this new situation. They felt singled out for expulsion from the park for game offenses, and they were angry when a Métis trapper in the park, convicted of using snares illegally, was not deprived of his trapping privileges, as they would have been. A telegram stated, "Indians complaining that he has been too leniently dealt with and that class distinction is entering in this case stop" (telegram from J. A. Urquhart to R. A. Gibson, 20 Feb. 1942; cf. letter from Gibson to Urquhart, 24 Feb. 1942; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). A letter from Park Warden Dempsey reported that "...Solomon Lacaille was an intimate friend of Warden Dent, and was probably not checked up, as signs indicate that snares have been in use on Lacaille's line for several winters..." (report by Warden J. Stewart in letter from M. J. Dempsey to J. A. Urquhart, n.d., PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). It was this same Warden Dent who had charged a group of Indians with refusing to allow him to check them at random in 1940 and who had supervised them so closely that he interfered with their trapping. The Indians may well have believed that Dent had different standards for enforcing the regulations for Indians and others in the park.

The Indians had told Halcrow in 1940 that they were still afraid that the government might one day evict them all from the park and that they wanted a reserve. In fact, Halcrow's statement suggests that their defiance of park regulations was linked to the government's bad faith in not providing them with the reserve they were promised in Treaty 8. Also, the Indians often believed many of the regulations to be foolish, although their views were not often solicited by the people who drafted the regulations.

Without a reserve, the Indians in the park were insecure and at the mercy of the park administration, which they distrusted. They renewed their efforts to obtain a reserve in 1942, when Indian Agent Melling reported,

> In view of the plight of the natives it was asked if a preserve could not be made out of the present 'C' portion of the Wood Buffalo Park with the object in view of giving the natives a permanent home from which they could not ever be ejected. It was pointed out by the Chief that prior to the formation of a system of trap lines in Alberta no problem existed because the eviction from one area simply meant the construction of a new house and trapping in another. Now, asks the chief, where can an Indian go if he is put out of the Park? It is all very well, he stated, to have a forceful law but there are a few Indians jsut as there are a few white men, who while they respect the law for what it is worth, yet will not or do not abide by it [diary extract, J. Melling, 2 July 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3; emphasis added].

Theoretically, the park Chipewyans should have been able to go to the Chipewyan reserve, but none are known to have done so. In any event, the reserve was good mainly for muskrat trapping, and following the 1939 drought the muskrat population was extremely low. There had even been a suggestion that some delta Chipewyan might be allowed to hunt in the park until the muskrats recovered. So the Chipewyan reserve was not an option for the Chipewyans in the park, nor did they want to live there. However, the creation of the reserve had used up the entire land allotment allowed by treaty for the Chipewyan band; Chipewyans in the park were not entitled to another reserve, in the park or elsewhere.

Park Chipewyan Turn Cree

Members of the Fort Chipewyan Cree and Chipewyan bands living in the park responded to this dilemma and to the problems they faced jointly within the park by deciding to join forces, which they hoped would strengthen the Cree band's request for its reserve. The new Indian Agent Jack Stewart reported in his journal for June 12, 1944, that he

> Had a meeting of the Cree Band in office today. Talked over the Election System and also the reserve they have asked for. Part of the Chipewyan band was also here and they put in an application for a transfer to the Cree band [PAA Stewart 12 June 1944].

This transfer occurred between June and December, 1944 (cf. PAA Stewart 26 Dec. 1944). The process seems to have been a simple one: a request was made for the transfer by the Indians, and the two chiefs agreed (field journal 1977 V:66). Band members did not have to approve the transfer by referendum. The Indian Agent must have had to approve the request. One Indian Affairs official claimed that Stewart played a major role in engineering the strategy so that the Indians could obtain more land for a reserve. Father Picard, who was resident in Fort Chipewyan at the time of the transfer, remembered that it was Stewart as Indian Agent who designated as members of the Cree band all the Indians in the two Fort Chipewyan bands who lived in the park (field journal 1977 IV:88), and it was Stewart who drew up the first (?) official band lists, with Father Picard's assistance for vital information such as birth dates when Stewart became Agent in 1944. Picard insisted that treaty was still open until about 1940 (field journal 1977 V:34). It would have simplified the transfer of individuals if the band lists were compiled at the same time as the legal transfer was effected. Another possibility is that several people were transferred each year over a period of several years (field journal 1978). Picard remembered Stewart, who had worked earlier in Wood Buffalo Park as a warden and who spoke fluent Cree, as working very hard on behalf of the Fort Chipewyan Indians. He wanted them to be able to remain in the bush and not be forced into town where they would have to live with his assistance (field journal 1977 V:25-6). Ironically, Stewart was asked then and later to implement department policies which would have the opposite effect; these are discussed later.

It is evident that since that Chipewyan band had now obtained its total reserve allotment, the only action the park Chipewyans could take was to throw their lot in with the Cree, hoping that their united forces would finally enable them to acquire a reserve or reserves within the park boundaries, as well as justifying the Cree claim for more reserve acreage due to having taken in the large number of Chipewyans (cf. field journal 1977 V:50). The transfer worked to the advantage of the delta Chipewyan also, because they no longer needed to worry about a possible influx of park Indians onto their reserve.

It was the new Cree chief, John Cowie (Cawi), who is credited with initiating the new efforts to obtain a reserve, beginning in 1942 (diary extract, J. Melling, 2 July 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). He was elected to the position when the former chief, Pierre Whitehead, died in 1941 or 1942 (field journal 1977 V:25; VI:18). He was assisted by John Baptiste Ambell, Jean Baptiste Gibot, and Billy (or Isidore?) Simpson (field journal 1977 V:25-6). The new chief and councillors of the amalgamated band were John Cowie, Jean Baptiste Gibot, Napoleon Martin, and Isidore Simpson, the former headman for the Chipewyan band in the park (PAA Stewart 26 Dec. 1944). The Cree and Chipewyan bands in the park merged their administrations.

This transfer involved more than simply a legal maneuver. It appears that as a result of this change and of the unity of interests imposed by the park situation, the Chipewyans and Crees were also ending their generations-old enmity and distinction between them. This interpretation is elaborated in the next chapter. It should be noted here that at the time of the fieldwork, in 1977 and 1978, this history was not known by any non-Natives other than Father Picard, especially not by those working for the park, and possibly not by many of the Natives either. A former park warden on one occasion could not account for the band shift, although he believed, correctly, that about 30 families changed from Chipewyan to Cree about 30 years earlier (field journal 1977 III: 83). Another warden was told either as part of his orientation or the "oral tradition" of his job that shortly after the park was established, all the Indians inside became Cree and all those outside, Chipewyan, to simplify administration (field journal 1978 VII:18). This story is common among the Indians and serves to justify and obscure the shift in ethnicity which was part of this process.

The newly constituted Cree band seems to have been optimistic about a speedy resolution of its request. In December, 1944, the chief and councillors visited Stewart "...wishing to know if the Dept. had mad[e] any decision about Reserve applied for in Wood Buffalo Park..." (PAA Stewart Dec. 1944). When no reserve was immediately forthcoming, one councillor modified his request, though perhaps not with the approval of the chief and other councillors:

> Councillor I. Simpson, who is the most interested in this matter, said he would like permission to keep cows and other farm animals in the park but some years ago Mr. Card, the Indian Agent at that time, told the Indians this was not possible. Therefore the Indians now think that if they had a reserve they would be allowed to keep these animals as is

> done in Indian Reserves in the provinces. He said it they were permitted to keep farm animals in the park they would not ask for a reserve. ...
>
> In my opinion the Indians in the Wood Buffalo [Park] do not need a reserve as the park is a wonderful game reserve for them and they have good hunting and trapping privileges. If they wish to they may put in gardens or even raise a grain crop, in the park without establishing a reserve. There would appear to be no objection by the Park Administration to the Indians keeping a few cows as the cutting of wild hay in the Park for feeding these animals in winter, would not affect the supply of forage available for the buffalo [letter from M. Meikle to R. A. Gibson, 27 June 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Simpson's request was related to the hard times the Indians were experiencing in the mid 1940s in hunting and trapping (see discussion below). A reply to this letter indicates that a reserve would not be considered:

> The request of the Indian Chief and Councillor Simpson for an Indian Reserve at Peace Point, Wood Buffalo Park...appears to be a renewal of representations submitted to the Department during the period 1926-1930 when we were dealing with the question of the rights of Indians to hunt and trap in the Wood Buffalo Park. At that time it was made clear to the Indian Affairs Branch and to the Indian Agents that generous treatment had been accorded to Indians who had hunted and trapped in that area prior to the time it was included in the park and that their established rights were being continued to them.
>
> ...it is not necessary for an Indian Reserve to be established Peace Point within the Wood Buffalo Park Reserve [memo from R. A. Gibson to M. Meikle, 9 July 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

The Indians did not stop trying. They raised the matter of the reserve with the Indian Agent at meetings (cf. PAA Stewart 1947), and Stewart in turn raised the matter with his superiors (memo from D. M. MacKay, Director IAB, to R. A. Gibson, 22 March 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A).

Gibson settled the issue with a memo which resolved the matter until the Cree band renewed its efforts in the 1970s: he informed Indian Affairs that "...under the provisions of the Transfer of Natural

Resources Act the lands conveyed to the Dominion Government for park purposes must be used for that purpose and none other" (memo from R. A. Gibson to D. M. MacKay, 8 April 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). Therefore, "...it is regretted..." that the park could not consider the department's request that a reserve be established within the park. In fact, the park administration could have resorted to the complicated maneuver that is underway today: the federal government agrees to relinquish designated sections of the park for park purposes; the land then reverts to the province, which in turn makes it available to the federal government for use by the Cree Indians as a reserve. Alberta was obligated by the same Transfer Act which Gibson cited to provide lands for Indian reserves. What has become politically difficult in the 1980s might have been possible in the 1940s, had the park administration been willing to consider it, and Indian Affairs willing to push for it.

WOOD BUFFALO PARK: NEW HUNTING AND TRAPPING REGULATIONS

Decline in Fur and Game

What the park administration was willing to consider, rather than a reserve, was more restricting access to game and fur bearers, which continued to decline seriously in the 1940s. Contrary to the opinion of park officials, the park was no longer "a wonderful game reserve." The natural conditions of drought and animal cycling combined with heavy trapping in the park had depleted the numbers of fur and game animals in the park. Also, the consequences of approximately 35 years without controlled burning finally caught up with the park in holocaust fires and decreased pasture for herbivores.

The seriousness of the situation was borne out by two reports published by Soper in 1942 and 1945,[7] by entries in the Indian Agents journals, and by correspondence in park files (see table 4). Soper pointed out the numerical decline in virtually all species hunted and trapped in the park: "in general, the fur resources...are at a low ebb" (Soper 1945:48; cf. J. P. Richards, "Wildlife Admin. and Supervision WBP," PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). Marten and fisher were almost exterminated by 1942; by 1945, hare, lynx, and muskrat were "scarce," and there was a "notable decrease" in beaver, mink, otter, coyote, and "colored" fox (black, silver, cross), although red fox was still "fairly common" (Soper 1945:48; cf. Soper 1942:127). Beaver were so depleted that their numbers "...had reached a serious state" (Soper 1945:42).

Big game was also scarce. Beginning in 1943, Indian Agent Melling informed the park officials that the scarcity of caribou meant "'...extreme shortage of meat for Indians...'" (memo from Director to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1943, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). In January, 1944, the Agent wrote, "park scarsity [sic] of Big Game Indians hard up owing to the aforegoing" (PAA Melling 16 Jan. 1944). At the same time, Isidore Simpson reported that big game was so scarce that some Indians at Jackfish Creek were "...practically starving," a message confirmed by Dempsey (telegram from N. W. Champagne to R. A. Gibson, 17 Jan. 1944, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). Moose were also reported to be down in number (see discussion below).

Soper commented on the problems faced by trappers in the park, in comments which presaged the end of the hunting and trapping lifestyle:

> We are all aware that the closing of the beaver season will work an increased hardship on the natives (as it has done in Alberta) and that their lot is already critical. Owing to coincident reduction in many other fur-bearers,

> their yearly income has gradually diminished. More and more they depended upon the spring beaver hunt. If this final, declining mainstay is abolished, their economic plight is readily foreseen [1945:44-45].
>
> As a result of all this, the Indian population finds itself in an unenviable position. Destitution, or rapidly approaching destitution, stares it in the face. At present by a whole series of interlocking consequences, the Indian's troubles are pyramiding as his economic world is crumbling [*ibid*.:50],

due to drought, natural animal cycles, over-trapping and over-hunting, successive reduction of species, "...and perhaps also, to some extent, belated measures in game management" (*ibid*.).

> To demonstrate further how the vicious cycle is operating in this case, it may be mentioned that many Indians, last winter, were turning to red squirrels as a last, local resource in order to eke out a living. Some individuals shot, trapped and snared hundreds of these little creatures [*ibid*.; cf. PAA Stewart 1946].

The squirrel population declined accordingly.

> Under ordinary circumstances the Indians - especially the better, adult hunters - would be contemptuous of resorting to such insignificant fur. But not today. It looks like the scraping of the bottom of the pot [Soper 1945:50].

The fact that it was these trappers who were killing squirrels rather than the "...well-grown boys and old men who are not capable of taking to the long trapping trails" (*ibid*.:55) indicates the scarcity of furs usually sought.

The economic difficulties predicted by Soper began to be serious in the winter of 1944. Fur prices had been high from 1941 to 1944, compensating somewhat for the poor fur catches, but "...a downward trend was indicated last winter [1944] with a further decrease in prices paid for raw fur at the beginning of the current season..." (memo from J. L. Grew to the Acting Director, 12 Jan. 1945, PAC RG 10 v. 6732 file 420-1-5).

> Notwithstanding the high prices received by the individual trapper in 1945 for the sale of his furs was $23.00 less than the sales value of his fur catch for 1934-35. With current declining fur values these natives will receive a smaller return from their trapping operations this year [memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

Gibson estimated the loss in revenue to park trappers to be approximately $80,000 annually (letter from Gibson to Dr. K. M. Cameron, 29 March 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 908 file 10659 pt. 2). These figures represented inflated dollars, worth less in purchasing power than dollars of the 1930s. The situation facing park trappers in the mid 1940s was grim. Indian Affairs Fur Supervisor J. L. Grew claimed that "...the primary producers of fur... as a class are probably in the poorest economic position of any in this country" (memo from Grew to the Acting Director, 12 Jan. 1945, PAC RG 10 v. 6732 file 420-1-5-3).

Park trappers shared the difficulties which Alberta trappers experienced in getting credit from 1944 on. The decline in the fur trade and consequent Indian impoverishment caused the abandonment of two of the three remaining trading posts in the park, those at Hay River and at Jackfish River, in 1945 ~~or~~ 1946 (Jim Parker, per. commun. 1981). The only posts people could use were those at Embarras and at Fort Chipewyan. The loss of trading convenience was another source of economic stress for the Indians which was not considered by park officials. Its impact will be discussed in the following chapter.

Proposed Solutions

Both Indians and park officials proposed solutions, interim measures and long-term solutions, to these problems. The efforts to gain a reserve in the park discussed above represented one major Indian strategy. The Indians were also willing to suggest restrictions on trapping which they saw to be reasonable ones. In 1942, they asked the Indian Agent if it might be possible for the park administration to consider limiting the number of muskrat traps to no more than 40 per trapper:

> The chief contended that no one man could effectively take care of more than 40 traps and that an attempt to use more simply means that some animals are being lost by improper attention. It was stated that as a means of fur conservation the number of traps for muskrat should be limited to 30 per trapper [diary extract, J. Melling, treaty trip, 2 July 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

This request was probably a response both to the depletion in the muskrat population and to the disproportionately large catch by White trappers. However, it may also have been recognition of the failure of the informal sanctions of the local bands.

The Indians recommended that the present limit of two martens per trapper be reduced to a closed season for about five years to allow the country to be restocked: "Simpson stated that after all having two marten did not constitute the difference between plenty and starvation for any person..." (ibid.). They felt that the limit of fifteen beaver per family head was all right,

> ...but would it not be better to allow the old people to trap directly from beaver lodges. Simpson contended that the practice would not materially deplete the beaver population and it would considerably assist the old [ibid.].

Finally, they requested that they be provided with additional bison meat when caribou were scarce (memo from Director to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1943, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2; PAA Melling 16 Jan. 1944; telegram from N. W. Champagne to R. A. Gibson, 17 Jan. 1944, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). When caribou returned to the region in the fall of 1945, they had enough meat to meet their subsistence needs, and requests for greater amounts of bison were few until 1947 and 1948.

Melling admonished the park officials to consider the Indians' suggestions seriously:

> After all, these Indians are the people that are living and trapping in the park and not all of them are stupid. If the Administration is interested in the efficient handling of Park affairs it might be well to listen to what some of the Indians have to say [diary extract, J. Melling, treaty trip, 2 July 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

It is evident from correspondence that the park administration never engaged in meaningful dialogue with the Indians regarding how the park animals might best be managed. The Indians were often viewed as irrational, childish, irresponsible exploiters who had to be carefully watched and managed, as one did other species in the park.

This view becomes apparent in the various conservation measures undertaken by park officials during the 1940s and in commentary about them. For instance, rather than relax the beaver regulations as the Indians had suggested, new restraints were imposed: the number of beaver a permit holder (family head) was allowed to take in one year was reduced in 1943 to a maximum of ten (letter from R. a. Gibson to J. A. Urquhart, 19 Aug. 1943, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). Chief Warden Dempsey suggested that as a conservation measure, the beaver quota and season be reduced even further, limiting the trapping to February and March and setting a firm deadline for the stamping of pelts, to prevent the hunting of beaver after open water (Soper 1945:43). Soper recommended that beaver hunting be closed completely for several years, stressing that "under the best of circumstances, optimum conditions cannot be restored for many years to come" (ibid.). He added that "even many of the Indians, themselves, hold this opinion." Beaver had been closed in Alberta since the spring of 1944; following Soper's report, a federal government report recommended that beaver be closed in the park and also part of the NWT (precis: "Beaver situation NWT and WBP;" Aug. 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3).

The main solution proposed by the park was a complete overhaul of the park hunting and trapping regulations. There was a committee appointed in 1945 consisting of M. Meikle, J. L. Grew, J. D. Soper, and M. J. Dempsey "...to enquire into certain fur conservation problems in Wood Buffalo Park" (6 July 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). The commmittee met with Indians at Fifth Meridian, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Smith, Fort Resolution, and Hay River (NWT) for what Soper termed "successful discussions" concerning the implementation of group trapping areas and registered traplines (Soper 1945:6), conservation of beaver, and wolf control. The committee recommended that group trapping areas be introduced in the park, following a scheme developed in northern Ontario, but with the Quatre Fourches area designated a community trapping area; that beaver be closed to all trapping and the park be restocked by live-trapping beaver;[8] and that wolf control measures be introduced. It estimated that the cost of implementing these recommendations would be $10,750 (Meikle et al., "Recommendations of committee appointed to enquire into certain fur conservation problems of WBP, 16 July 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3).[9]

The possibility of registered trapping areas in the park had already been raised with the Indians in the fall of 1944, when Jack Stewart reported that he had asked Chief Cowie and his councillors to talk to their people about trapping areas in the park (PAA Stewart 1944). Soper reported that three bands out of the five the committee met

> ...were definitely opposed to such organization, or to the closing of the beaver season, i.e., Fitzgerald-Fort Smith; Fort Resolution; and Hay River. Fifth Meridian and Chipewyan bands were, eventually, after much discussion, in favour of

> group trapping areas [letter from J. Dewey Soper to J. Smart, Controller, Nat. Parks Bureau, 18 July 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3; cf. PAA Stewart 27 and 30 June, 1945].

Later information suggests, however, that the Indians may not have understood what the group trapping areas would mean in terms of restricted access to fur and game resources.

Stewart began advising Indians about their selection of trapping areas during the winter of 1946-47, recommending that they "...register in groups as much as possible" (PAA Stewart 28 Jan., 10 Feb. 1947). These groups followed the alignments of the local bands to a large extent. One of the problems with the group areas was that they did not provide for equal access to all types of fur by all trappers. Fuller (1951a) indicated the degree of variability of fur resources throughout the park. For instance, the delta is the most productive area for muskrats, and wihtin the delta some areas are more productive than others, ranging between 50 and 120 muskrats per square mile (_ibid._:3, 57). Birch River is poorer in muskrats but has more fine furs (_ibid._:62). However, it was muskrats which were the basis of the fur trade, making up about 70 per cent of the dollar value of all furs sold (_ibid._). The proposed communal muskrat hunting area in the delta would have been a partial solution to this variability, especially as artificial means could have been used to increase muskrat populations.

The communal muskrat hunting area was never implemented. Stewart wrote,

> It had been verbally agreed that the Delta area would be left as a reserve open to all to hunt rats on, and I found out that the Local Park Officials had started to Issue Areas to half-breeds in this supposed reserve, which most likely would have been to the detriment of the Indian. I therefore asked that some ruling be forwarded from Fort Smith or Ottawa before Issueing [_sic_] of other areas [PAA Stewart 30 Jan. 1947].

Stewart's protests landed him in hot water with the local Métis; a few days after the previous entry, he wrote,

> Many of the Halfbreeds who have Park rights are coming in to ask about Park rights; they seem to have the idea that I want all the Park for the Indians only [*ibid*. 4 Feb. 1947].

Despite Stewart's protests, many of the richest muskrat areas ended up under the control of individual trappers, all of whom were Métis or White. Although Indians did tell park officials where they wished their trapping areas to be located, they continued to protest against the imposition of this new system: at the June treaty meeting with the Cree band in 1947, the Crees "...were very definite about not wanting group areas in the Park" (PAA Stewart 19,23 June 1947). These protests achieved nothing, and on September 17, 1949, the park was officially divided into group and individual trapping areas, as shown in figure 7.

Wolf "Control"

The implementation of restricted trapping areas was begun along with new restrictions on hunting moose, one of the critical subsistence resources of the Indians, and of new administrative attitudes about game management in the park. Soper spoke of the question of the relation between wolf and human predation and the level of bison and moose populations in his 1945 paper. In particular, he was concerned about the joint problem of apparently low bison and moose population numbers and apparently large wolf and human predation.

Soper argued that the bison range should support approximately 85,000 bison (Soper 1945:21), while actual numbers were estimated to be about 20,000 head (*ibid*.:16). He anticipated an actual increase of at least eight percent (based on southern fertility figures), and he speculated about reasons behind the difference in bison numbers compared

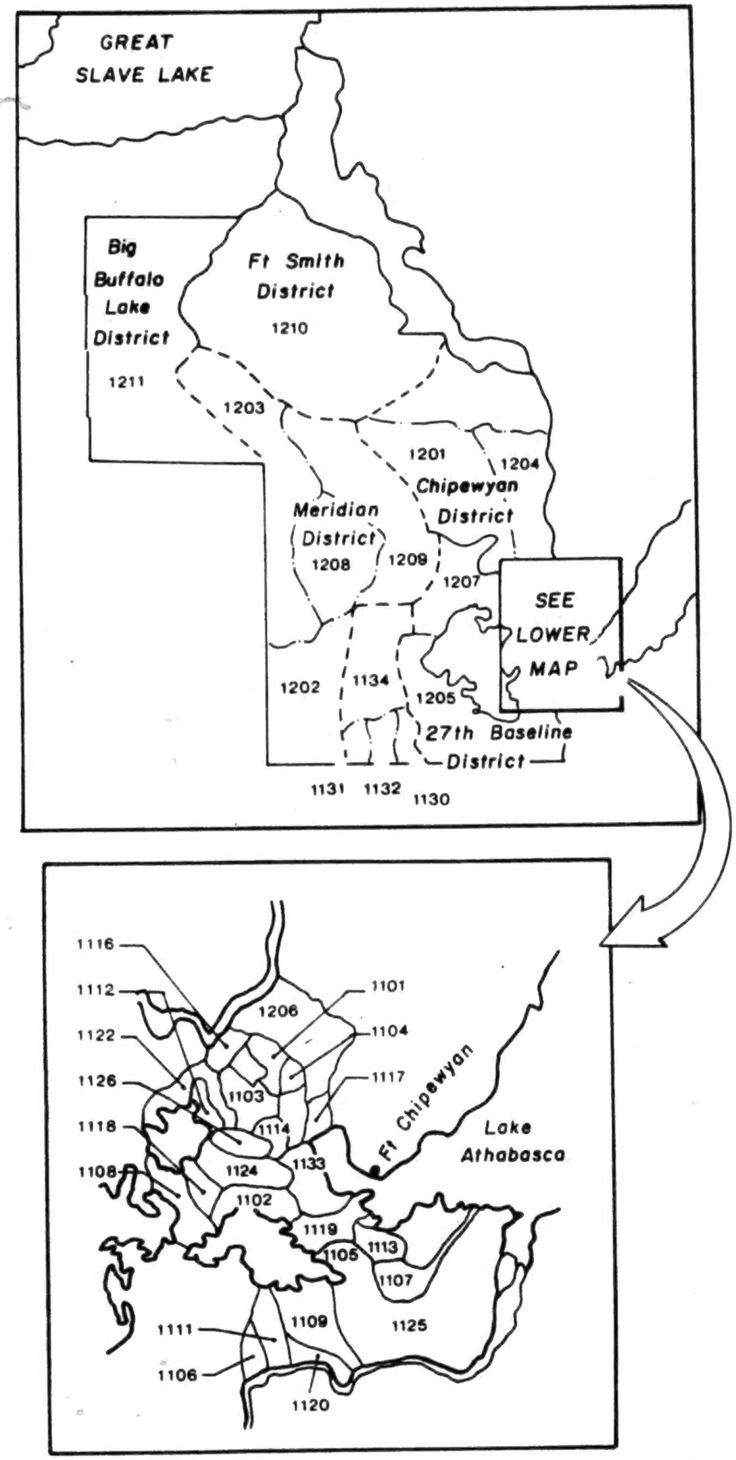
GREAT SLAVE LAKE
Big Buffalo Lake District
1211
Ft Smith District
1210
1203
1201
1204
Chipewyan District
Meridian District
1208
1209
1207
SEE LOWER MAP
1202
1134
1205
27th Baseline District
1131
1132
1130
1116
1112
1122
1126
1118
1108
1206
1101
1104
1117
1103
1114
1124
1133
1102
1119
1105
1113
1107
Ft Chipewyan
Lake Athabasca
1111
1109
1125
1106
1120

Figure 7

Trapping Areas in the 1950s, Wood Buffalo National Park

[Adapted from Mathewson 1974:6; original source WBNP files] to his projections. He suggested that the causes might lie in timber wolf predation, high natural mortality due to the natural hazards of the park, and possibly lower fertility than southern bison (ibid.:17-18). The annual kill for the missions and Indian Affairs also took a few bison each fall (ibid.:21). Despite this list of factors, which did not include illegal hunting, he decided that wolf predation was the major cause of the difference, saying that wolves had increased considerably in the park since the 1930s (ibid.:19-23). Native hunters encouraged him in this belief:

> The Indians are eloquently assertive on the score of wolf depredations. It is regrettable, however, that they are not more aggressive in combating an economic evil that effects [sic] them more acutely than anyone else [unclear, because Indians were not allowed to hunt bison]. Strangely enough, many of them appear quite indifferent to throwing their own weight into the business of control, but still they want [predator] control [ibid.:33; cf. PAA Melling 16 Jan. 1944].

He accounted for this failing by the "...hereditary prejudice, or superstition, in connection with killing wolves," which some groups still possessed (Soper 1945:34). He did not consider the possibility that Indians may have been blaming wolves for killing that they had been doing themselves, as Jarvis had in 1907, nor is there any suggestion in his paper that he looked into the other factors he listed.

Soper jumped to conclusions, and he arrived at a position of contradiction. He recognized that the park was established as a wildlife sanctuary, particularly for bison in a natural or free-ranging state, where they would be subjected to the full range of natural hazards and predators, except for human ones. There was no suggestion that bison hunting should be allowed except for the limited mission and welfare hunts. Nevertheless, he objected to wolf predation on bison, stating that

> It is...regrettable that even bison destroyed by wolves... could not have found its way into the hands of the Indians instead [Soper 1945:29].
>
> ...the meat consumed by wolves is a very regrettable feature, since it seems such a useless waste of food [ibid.: 30].
>
> We owe nothing to wolves, but we have a real responsibility in respect to the Indian. Bison are also a greater actual, or potential economic asset than the timber wolf [ibid.].

In fairness to Soper, he did point out that moose, a major Indian resource, were also the victims of wolf predation, although he did not supply any figures to support his claim that "moose are killed by wolves on a relatively important scale..." (1945:29). Nevertheless, he related this "problem" to a decline in numbers of moose:

> ...I seem to have reliable information to the effect that in large areas of the park moose are becoming consistently scarcer and the Indians are experiencing greater difficuly [sic] in obtaining meat for their own consumption [ibid.: 29].

Table 6 shows the number of moose killed in the park from 1931 to 1946; the numbers did not drop significantly in the 1940s. The drop in the 1945-46 season reflected a new restriction on hunting, not a decline in the moose population. Soper did not explain the source of this "reliable" information, nor did he discuss the possibility that moose, as with many other boreal species, may cycle in number or may have been over hunted. Native hunters had always "competed" with wolves for game, yet never before had the moose been as threatened as they appeared to the park staff to be by the mid 1940s. The park Indians claimed that there were ample moose in the park.

Soper concluded that because the park supported "'hundreds of Indian trappers...'" there could not be "'...a true, natural condition...'" in the park or a "'...normal "balance of nature"'" due to the large amount of human predation. "'Having admitted this point, it is clear

Table 6

Moose Harvests in Wood Buffalo Park

1931-32 to 1945-46

Year	Number of Moose
1931-32	265
1932-33	230
1933-34	298
1934-35	366
1935-36	423
1936-37	348
1937-38	433
1938-39	366
1939-40	370
1940-41	406
1941-42	351
1942-43	296
1943-44	287
1944-45	214
1945-46	149

("Statement showing number of moose taken in Wood Buffalo Park during the period 1931-32 to 1944-45 inclusive," ca. 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A) that there is no such thing as natural balance in Wood Buffalo Park'" (1945:28-29). Therefore, he and "the Wood Buffalo Park committee recommended more extensive timber wolf control measures..." (ibid.:28; cf. Meikle et al., "Recommendations of Committee...," 16 July 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). Soper suggested that a combination of poison (strychnine) and a bounty system be used.

Soper claimed that

> The Indians are against the use of poison. That is, they do not want it for themselves (for one thing, they are afraid of it) but they are certainly glad that the wardens are disposing of many of the wolves by this method [1945:34].

In fact, Chief Cowie protested against the use of poison by anyone in the park. He raised the issue with the Indian Agent (PAA Melling 1944) and with the park wardens:

> Chief Cowie informs me that Ranger Sutherland arrived at his place, Baril Creek, with instructions to select seven dependable Treaty Indians for the purpose of poisoning wolves, this under the supervision of three rangers.
>
> The Chief and band object very strongly to this method as it will cause discontent among the band and is not conductive to conservation of wild life [other animals not the target of the poison would die, and wildlife would be wasted]. ...
>
> There are probably only two Indians who have had any experience with poison. Viz: Headman Simpson, Chip. BD, and Chief Cowie, the latter having had considerable while trapping with his brother-in-law, a whiteman, who used considerable poison trapping south and east of McMurray prior to 1908, this district was cleaned of fine fur at that time... [letter from R. Armit for Agent, Fort Chipewyan, to the Sec. IAB, 6 Feb. 1944, PAC RG 10 v. 6731 file 420-1-5].

The Chief told the warden that he would rather see bounty paid for wolves. Despite these objections, there were "serious attempts" made at poisoning wolves in 1941-42 and a limited wolf kill program in 1948-49. In 1946-47, park staff tested the "Humane Coyote Getter," a cyanide gun (WBNP Mitchell 1976:40-41). The park wardens also set traps for wolves wherever their signs were encountered (WBNP Oldham 1946, 1947).

Soper justified the introduction of a bounty system, which he referred to rather ambiguously as disfavored by the "Department," on both economic and moral grounds, as well as a device for reducing wolf numbers:

> As the Department thoroughly disfavours the bounty system, as such, but regards some remunerative measure as desirable for Wood Buffalo Park, it could be disguised under another name [1945:35-36].

For example, the park could purchase wolf pelts at a price above the market value, then $10 each (ibid.).

> I have in mind that if some system of reward were instituted, the moral value would undoubtedly be pronounced in encouraging the park Indians to exert themselves in taking wolves. This is what I chiefly have in view. Again, it would tend to offset the financial loss of native trappers where the beaver season may be closed. it would unquestionably be salutary if some type of conversion were put into effect whereby the Indians could in some way honestly earn an adequate monetary reward for killing wolves, rather than perhaps go on relief in the nature of an unearned dole [ibid.:36].

Restrictions on Moose Hunting

Wolf control measures were aimed at the preservation of the bison and moose populations. While bison were protected from all human predation except for the limited hunts, moose could be hunted by status Indians at any time. In order to protect the moose population further, park officials decided to restrict moose hunting by Indians. Those setting policy had always believed that the Indians killed game unnecessarily and wasted meat, as illustrated by an incident which occurred in 1940, when Narcisse Sarcee killed five moose in the Jackfish River area in one day, in what must have been a stroke of luck. Gibson in Ottawa wrote to the local park superintendent, J. A. Urquhart, questioning whether or not the hunter really needed the meat and asking what had happened to it:

> This report would indicate that the Indians sometimes slaughter the wildlife unnecessarily and, apparently, they are not
> coopera cooperating with the Department in its endeavour to conserve and utilize the wild life of the Wood Buffalo Park to the best advantage [letter from R. A. Gibson to J. A. Urquart, 16 March 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Gibson suggested that the permittees should be warned "...that if they destroy wild life unnecessarily or if the meat of any of the big game animals is wasted their permits to enter the park will be cancelled" (ibid.). This letter was followed up by a report from Bob Allan, the Jackfish River warden, to Chief Warden Dempsey:

> He said he killed the moose right close to his camp and gave a large portion of the meat to Antoine Cascamon a man in needy circumstances with a large family. Sarcee himself has six children at home and told me they were living on straight meat till he got some fur [to trade for food?]. He assured me that none of the meat was wasted and that they made dried meat out of a large portion of it.
>
> Personally I have never known of an instance of an Indian wasting meat [letter from Robt. J. Allan, to J. Dempsey, 2 June 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3].

Stewart agreed with Allan's report. In 1947, he commented on the park's fears about Indians wasting meat:

> Regarding the restrictions on Big Game and Migratory Birds, all the Indians and practically all others feel that these restrictions are not suited to this country, but are suited only for areas where fresh meat and other assorted foods can be had for mere matter of being able to pay for them, the tone of some of the Park Wardens talk is that Indians will kill any animal at any time whether he needs the meat or not, this I do not believe, having travelled with them and visited them many times, my opinion is that they will conserve game under normal circumstances better than white men will.
>
> These Indians do not actually want rations but only that they be allowed a reasonable amount of meat and birds, and that Game Laws be regulated to suit the country and the people in it, they do not wish to slaughter either Big Game or Migratory Birds but they do wish to have a little fresh meat from time to time [memo from J. W. Stewart to R. A. Hoey, 6 Sept. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2].

Despite these assurances and the Indians' need for an adequate supply of meat and hides at a time when their purchasing power was declining steadily, in late 1945 or 1946 the park adopted a regulation "...providing a bag limit of one male moose for each hunter annually" (memo from M. Meikle to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1947; cf. letter from E. G. Oldham to R. A. Gibson, 15 Sept. 1947; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). Meikle suggested that bison should be harvested in increased numbers in order to allow the conservation of "...other valuable big game animals" (memo from Meikle to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). However, he believed that the hunting restrictions did not protect the moose adequately, and he suggested further,

> Under current conditions, the natives are unable to obtain sufficient moose-hides for their requirements in making clothing. ...It might be advisable to prohibit the killing of moose entirely in the Wood Buffalo Park with the object of permitting the animals to increase so that the surplus would serve to restock areas adjacent to the park [ibid.].

He thought that each married Native hunter might be allowed one buffalo carcass each year in lieu of his one moose; originally it had been suggested that each permit holder should have a buffalo in addition to his one moose (ibid.). He concluded,

> ...the Indians will find it very difficult to make a living from hunting and trapping when fur prices decline.
>
> Each year at treaty time the Indians ask the Indian Agent at Fort Resolution and Chipewyan when the government is going to permit them to obtain buffalo for food purposes [ibid.].

Meikle's recommendations were not followed.

Both Indians and Indian Affairs protested the new restriction on hunting moose. Indians raised the matter with Stewart on his June treaty trip (PAA Stewart 19 June 1947). Stewart reported that he

> had a talk with Park officials. I might say there is quite a battle going on here at present over Game Laws. Park officials say that Indians do no[t] need fresh meat in the summer and that moose are scarce but Indians claim that moose are not scarce, and that they cannot have a decent diet without meat [ibid. 21 June 1947].

On July 2, he reported, "Indians are very bitter about Big Game regulations....Their argument is, what do a bunch of New officials know about the Park" (ibid.). Stewart believed that there was a lot of truth in that, and he met with park officials on several occasions, representing the Indians, though with no success.

A revealing communication from E. G. Oldham, the Superintendent of Forests and Wildlife, to Gibson stated their position:

> I am not familiar with the promises that were made to the natives when the original Treaties were signed. Dr. Mulvihill [Indian Affairs] points out that in his opinion the present restrictions on the killing of game for food are unjustified. If Dr. Mulvihill would study, only briefly, the returns of fur and game taken in the Resolution area I am sure he could see that the annual take has fallen off alarmingly. This can mean only one thing - the scarcity of wildlife. ...
>
> The wildlife population in Wood Buffalo Park, excepting Buffalo, has certainly hit a very low ebb. It is, therefore, apparent that steps must be taken in order to ensure that the Indians be not allowed to suffer too much, since they do for the most part depend on wildlife to affort them their means for making a living, whether it is by selling furs or taking game for food and clothing, or a combination of both [letter from Oldham to Gibson, 15 Sept. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

That is, a little suffering on the part of the Indians was acceptable to Oldham, but they should not be allowed to die of want. Meanwhile, the government was not willing to allow the Indians to harvest bison on even a limited basis, although a few years later it would implement a commercial bison slaughter program (chapter 7). As well, Indians were not to be allowed to violate the Migratory Birds Convention:

> As to the improbability that the few ducks the Indians would

> kill would have very little bearing on the Canadian and American sportsmen's hunting in the fall, I believe this sentence to be childish in that we do have to take into account everyone and everything that regulations effect [_sic_] [_ibid_.].

Oldham responded also to a letter by G. H. Gooderham, in which Gooderham claimed "...that a drive is being put on in Wood Buffalo Park to restrict Indian activity" (_ibid_.):

> Mr. Gooderham mentions local officials as advocating (1) that the Indians live on fish; (2) that they be put on reserves and fed by the Government [_ibid_.].

While Oldham doubted that park officials would act in such a way, he admitted that "we have, however, advocated that the Indians use more fish to feed themselves and primarily their dogs, rather than using caribou meat..." (_ibid_.). He also answered criticisms by Stewart, who claimed that there was no abuse of the Migratory Bird Act or the Big Game Act. Oldham contended that there was "considerable abuse" since game is disappearing "...to such a point where now it is practically impossible for the Indians to provide for themselves" (_ibid_.).

> Mr. Stewart indicates that he has spoken to Park Wardens and Game Guardians about the game situation, and he divides the opinions into three categories, those who believe the Indians are too lazy to fish for a living; those who believe the Indian as [_sic_] a ward of the Government and not a human being; those who take a broad view of the matter. ... I do not think our Wardens fall into any of the three categories [_ibid_.].

Oldham overlooked the fact that Stewart had been a park warden until 1944 and so in a position to speak authoritatively about wardens' attitudes towards Indians. He termed "impossible" Stewart's request "...that the Indians be allowed to hunt and trap unrestricted" (_ibid_.). Oldham's defense of park policy is an example of "blaming the victim" rather than seeking the cause of the problem (cf. Ryan 1976).

Some Indians in the park responded to the new restriction on moose hunting by hunting outside the park in Alberta, which created new conflicts with the province. Increased "tension" between Indians and White trappers already existed as a result of the Alberta registered traplines: "They are very jealous of each other's rights..." (letter from J. A. Urquhart to R. A. Gibson, 28 Feb. 1942, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3). The Alberta Trappers Association had already complained

> ...that they understand the policy in Wood Buffalo Park is to exclude any person who, through a series of convictions, makes him undesirable as far as hunting and trapping operations in the Park are concerned. The result of this exclusion is that the man comes across the river into provincial territory and there carries on his illegal habits, which causes the trapper in that area to rather resent his being, to an extent, forced upon them [letter from E. S. Huestis, Alberta Fish and Game Comm., to R. A. Gibson, 28 Jan. 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

In 1947 the new moose hunting restriction in the park led to a more specific problem. Robson of the Fort Chipewyan RCMP detachment reported,

> The trappers [from the park]...are not going to waste a lot of time tracking a moose in the bush because they might find when they get to it that it is a female and they would not be allowed to kill it or it may be one not over a year. They feel that the ones which make the best eating are the young ones. The old bulls are always very tough and they do not care for them [C. W. Robson, "Game conditions general Fort Chipewyan district," 29 March 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

As a result, at least some Indians were hunting outside the park in Alberta, which they were legally entitled to do:

> In fact the Indian Agent has advised several Indians in this district that they have a perfect right to travel wherever they wish in Alberta as long as they are not caught on someone's trap line in possession of a 22 rifle or traps [ibid.]

However, trappers in Alberta were worried about Indians poaching beaver on their lines. Alberta Fish and Game Commissioner E. S. Huestis raised the problem with Ottawa, pointing out that the Alberta Game Act "...allows any person in the north country in destitute condition to take big game animals for food at any time of the year" (letter from Huestis to Gibson, 30 April 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). A memo written later attributes Huestis' and the Alberta trappers' complaints to jealousy:

> It is my belief that this complaint originates from the Fort Chipewyan trappers because of the fact that last winter the caribou nearly all migrated into Wood Buffalo Park and did not stay in Alberta in the vicinity of Fort Chipewyan. The Alberta Trappers were unable to go into the Park to shoot their caribou whereas in past years the Park trappers shot most of their caribou in Alberta. The Alberta trappers, therefore, feel Park trappers should not hunt caribou outside of the Park when they cannot go into the Park to hunt caribou [memo from E. G. Oldham to R. A. Gibson, 28 May 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

Hunting in Alberta, despite the complaints raised by local trappers, must not have occurred on a large scale, and certainly not all Wood Buffalo Park trappers took advantage of the Alberta Game Act provision.

Requests for Bison

Most park trappers stayed in the park and attempted to cope with the worsening situation in their home territory. In 1947, Stewart asked park officials to assist in issuing rations to Indians in the more isolated areas (memo from J. W. Stewart to R. A. Hoey, 6 Sept. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). By 1948, the situation was desperate. In January, park officials received an urgent request to take eight bison in Fifth Meridian district for 44 park permit holders who were "...all in dire need" (telegram from E. G. Oldham to R. A. Gibson, 9 Jan. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). A response to this telegram questioned whether or not the Fifth Meridian people were really destitute, though admitting that "we do know that our Northern Indians are experiencing a very difficult time in obtaining their livelihood" (letter from Hoey to Gibson, 20 Jan. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). A memo sent by the Indian Superintendent for the Little Red River and Fifth Meridian area was explicit about the Indian need for bison meat: on a recent visit to those settlements, he

> ...found all the Indians visited, desperately in need of meat. ...
>
> Owing to the continued scarcity of Fur, Indians are having a hard time, and regulations designed for the preservation of Buffalo should not result in their being deprived of the right to live [memo from Neil Walker, Supt. Fort Vermilion, to G. Armstrong, IAB, 31 Jan. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2].

Park officials refused to grant this plea for help on the grounds that "...it is now too late in the season to conduct a buffalo hunt in the area indicated" (memo from R. A. Gibson to R. A. Hoey, 16 Feb. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). Stewart requested that every Indian holding a park hunting and trapping permit be made eligible for a bison:

> There are reports coming in of Indians not having had any meat all winter, and this I can quite believe as caribou were few and the younger Indians are poor moose hunters, hence some families must have been without meat, this is a serious matter for people whose main diet in the past has been meat [memo from Stewart to IAB, 26 April 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2].

This request was denied on the grounds that the warden staff was too inexperienced to supervise an Indian bison hunt adequately. Instead, it was recommended that the number of bison slaughtered by the park wardens for distribution by Indian Affairs be doubled: "In this way the most needy natives will receive the direct benefit of the slaughter of buffalo" (memo from Fred Fraser, District Agent, to R. A. Gibson, 20 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). In the future, the minimum slaughter was to be 90 bison, and the maximum, about 100, which included the bison for the missions (*ibid.*).[10]

The Indians' situation should have been alleviated by the improvement in muskrats in 1948. Dempsey Creek, which had been closed to trapping for seven years, was to be opened again to about 25 treaty Indians (Stewart 28 Feb. 1948; cf. Fuller 1951a:54). The park District Administrator suggested that the Indians should be allowed to take muskrats in December in the shallow lakes which usually freeze to the bottom, killing whatever muskrats lived there:

> By allowing permit holders to trap during the month of December, it will break the winter and give them income right in the middle of a period when they previously had little or none. Assumption here is that the majority of trappers receive compensation of some nature almost till the close of navigation. The next compensation they receive is often from the sale of muskrat skins sometime after the first of March [memo from Fred Fraser to R. A. Gibson, 8 Sept. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

It is not known whether or not this trapping season was allowed. Fraser's comment about compensation for trappers may reflect the short term employment available to some trappers with a commercial fishing operation which entered the park on a trial basis in 1948 (chapter 7). However, it is unlikely that there was much employment for park trappers from other sources, contrary to Fraser's assumption.

Poor fur prices and the continued scarcity of big game throughout 1948 created serious economic and subsistence problems for families in the park. Despite the more favorable muskrat situation, Indians found it difficult to make a living (cf. PAA Stewart 22 March 1948). These difficulties led to internal political dissension: the chief was accused by his band members of not trying "...to stop the continued adding of restrictions on game" and not asking "...for enough relief..." (ibid. 12 Aug. 1948). Stewart informed the band that its chief was not at fault, and he suggested that these complaints were unwarranted. Such discord resulted from the increasing powerlessness and economic problems of the Indians and consequent increased dependence on the assistance of the Indian Agent. The band chief was in the unfortunate position of mediating between members of the band and various govenrment agencies over which he had no influence.

The Elimination of Controlled Burning: A Hidden Causal Factor

There was a final factor which neither Inidians, government agents, nor wildlife researchers suggested as instrumental in the decline in animal populations: the fact that there had been no controlled burning in the park for about 20 to 35 years. The park wardens did recognize that "...the disastrous forest fires of the past few years" were one cause of the poor fur and game conditions (memo from Meikle to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A), but they did not speculate about the causes of these fires. They began at least by 1944, when Isidore Simpson reported to Stewart that "...a large part of Wood Buffalo Park North of [Peace] River has been burned and is still burning in places" as late as mid December (PAA Stewart 14 Dec. 1944). In 1947, the park staff estimated that about 50 percent of the park had been burned (memo from Meikle to Cumming, 12 Feb. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). These forest fires were holocaust fires, tremendously destructive to vegetation and wildlife, both of which took much longer to recover than following a low-intensity controlled burn.

These fires may have been one consequence of the halt to regular Indian controlled burning, possibly when warden supervision began in the

1910s and certainly by the 1920s. Once such burning had stopped, secondary vegetation began to encroach on the meadows and other burned areas. By the mid 1940s, most of these clearings were covered with trees and brush in various stages of growth. A study conducted by W. W. Jeffrey in the lower Peace River area in the 1950s discussed the succession of prairie to forest in the Peace Point vicinity:

> In 1928 a substantial prairie remained; in 1959 it had almost disappeared [Jeffrey 1961:443].
>
> Since Raup's examination in 1928, the prairie had undergone a noticeable invasion by trembling aspen....Over 3/4 of the area shown as grassland in Figure 1 [Raup's 1935 map] had undergone transition to closed aspen forest, or was in the process of conversion through an intermediate *Populus tremuloides* - *Salix Rebbiana* [*sic*] open forest stage. ...
>
> The stands of the aspen forest were of variable age, though typically fairly regular in structure as maturity was reached. Near the ranger station they were dense, up to 40 ft high...[*ibid*.:442].
>
> At this time, the few remaining prairie openings occur on the lower plain close to the river margin. ...The remainder of the area is occupied by trembling aspen...forest in which very infrequent solitary white spruce are found [*ibid*.].

Jeffrey noted that this aspen stand was floristically different from other aspen stands in the region, apparently a homogeneous stand extending for several miles, eliminating the mosaic pattern of growth so productive for animal populations. He conjectured that

> ...the prairie might have been anthropogenic, possibly pyrric, in origin rather than the natural expression of physical environment [1961:444],

which had been Raup's explanation. He went on,

> The possible reasons for invasion of the prairie are problematic...and include, among others, climatic changes and recent fire suppression [*ibid*.].

Essentially, the suppression of Indian burning in the region meant the beginning of environmental degradation, possibly by the mid

1930s or even earlier: there was less pasture available for moose, bison, and many of the fur bearers, as well as for the small mammals on which carnivores such as fox, coyote, and wolf depended. The pasture available was of poorer quality. It is not surprising, therefore, that bison were not increasing to the numbers expected, and that moose were declining in number as the high quality browse disappeared and hunting pressures remained high. Moreover, 20 to 35 years without regular fires would have allowed for the buildup of a considerable amount of ground litter, which would provide fuel for holocaust fires in a dry year. Dry years were obviously part of the climatic pattern which had produced the drought of the 1939 season and low water in later years. The fires of the 1940s were not surprising.[11]

It seems reasonable to conclude that the prohibition of Indian burning which began before the park was created and continued thereafter was a major factor in the problems facing the park administration (what decisions it should make about game and fur conservation), the Indians (how to make an adequate living), and the environment itself in the 1940s. Because controlled burning has been seen as a useful management strategy only recently, this possibility was unlikely to have occurred to park officials or wildlife specialists such as Soper in the 1940s, although by that late date the damage had already been done.

Implications

An inescapable conclusion of the analysis of the history of the park presented in this and the previous chapter is that the problems faced by park officials in the 1940s were not caused by Native hunting and trapping *per se*, although these activities were at more intensive and sustained levels than was the case in the period before 1919.

Instead, they were the consequence of ambiguities in the regulatory structures imposed by the officials themselves. These regulatory structures prohibited controlled burning as a management strategy. They allowed White trappers to continue their activities in the park, despite their high levels of fur production. Finally, Indians were not consulted as to game regulations but were viewed as adversaries to be controlled for their own interests and for those of the park officials. Once these policies were entrenched, the park administration continued to follow them in dealing with the problems created in large measure by park regulations.

CONCLUSION

The highlights of the 1940s in the Fort Chipewyan region were the war time boom, the continued decline of critical fur and game populations, and the elaboration of more rigid federal and provincial regulatory structures designed to restrict access to animal populations. The economic expansion of the Canol project seems to have had little impact on the hunting and trapping economy. While some local Natives may have found jobs, there is little suggestion that these were a major source of income during these years. The war-related developments were more important for their post-war implications.

Both provincial and federal governments took several steps to conserve game and fur and preserve the trapping. Registered traplines were introduced at the beginning of the decade in Alberta, and at the end of the decade in Wood Buffalo Park, which also established group trapping areas for Indians. Indians tended to view these constraints as unsuitable to the variable availability of the animal species in the bush. They resisted these new hindrances to their freedom of movement, though without success.

The period ended with the serious decline of fur prices in 1948, not to rise again except sporadically until 1973. This decline combined with the depletion of animal populations and soaring post-war inflation and coincided with post-war efforts to "open up" and "develop" the north which are discussed later (chapter 7). It was a combination of events which would create grave economic problems for Fort Chipewyan Natives and would signal the end of the fur trade mode of production as the basis of a lifestyle which governments would find acceptable and Indians would find workable. Government efforts to transform the north economically and the Native peoples culturally in order to facilitate the exploitation of its resources in the 1950s and after are the subjects of chapters 7 and 8. 1948 ended one era of underdevelopment for Native peoples, the era in which their impoverishment was created and they were separated from their resource base. It began another era of underdevelopment which would go in somewhat different directions.

NOTES

[1] When oil was discovered in 1947 at Leduc, Alberta, the refinery in Whitehorse, which had processed the Norman Wells oil, was dismantled and shipped to Edmonton. The pipeline, too, was purchased and dismantled (Diubaldo 1977:190). The development of the Norman Wells oil field, on which so many millions of dollars had already been spent, was halted for the time being.

[2] The influx of construction workers was good for local business. Major bases for the project personnel were established at Forts McMurray,

Fitzgerald, and Smith, each the location of an interruption in transport. There was also a small detachment of men posted at Fort Chipewyan, "...maybe a couple of dozen men" (Hamdon 1978). They were provisioned from the outside with K-rations, but they also purchased supplies locally (ibid.; cf. Leising 1959:82).

[3] Old age pensions, although introduced in 1927 (Morton 1972:457), were not awarded to status Indians until the 1950s because of "'difficulties of administration'" (SJC 1946:808). Probably more to the point was that Indian elders were not a political force in provincial or federal politics, since they did not yet have the franchise, and since they may have been believed too old to change their ways and contribute to the industrial development of the north. Therefore, money should not be wasted on them that could be better spend on their children.

[4] Contrary to government expectations, several traplines were increased in size in the early 1970s, with smaller areas amalgamated into larger ones due, probably, to the poor prices of fur in the post-war period (field journals 1977 II:47; VI:11). Some trappers found that they could not make enough money from the original lines. That is, the response of these trappers to decreased "fiscal carrying capacity" (Oliver Glimsdale, field journal 1977 VI:11), the result of lower fur prices, was to increase their productivity.

[5] The provincial government was responsible for the creation of this and other similar organizations. The Annual Report of the Alberta Department of Lands and Mines for 1944-45 states, "at the instigation of the Department a number of local trappers' associations have been formed at various points throughout the Province" (Dept. of Lands and Mines Alta. 1946:89).

[6] Proposed muskrat conservation projects were not implemented in the 1940s on the reserve because of the difficulties associated with developing the prerequisite federal-provincial agreement; any conservation scheme affecting the reserve would affect Alberta lands as well (letter from Colin Gibson to J. M. Dechene, M.P., 24 Nov. 1949; letter from J. M. Dechene to Father Picard, 3 Dec. 1949; letter from Dechene to ?, n.d.; all in Archives of the OMI).

[7] Soper conducted further wildlife investigations in the park in the summer of 1944 and 1945, in conjunction with a project known as the "North Pacific Planning Project," which involved "special inquiries into the natural resources of northwestern Canada" (1945:4). This project was probably associated with the northwest defence, but I do not know whether it was Canadian or U.S. in origin and administration; it may have been a joint project.

[8] Once again the park administration studied the possibility of more fur conservation projects, recognizing in 1947

> That there is a responsibility upon our department to take whatever steps are necessary to improve the economic position of the natives who lead the hunting life...[memo from R. A. Gibson to M. Meikle, 17 Dec. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

It engaged in mutual considerations with the province and with Ducks Unlimited, but nothing came of these investigations (see note 6).

[9] The Committee added to its report this provision:

> Unless there are adequate regulations provided to enforce the group trapping policy in the park the whole scheme is in danger of failure as the Indians must confine their trapping activities to their own group area [Meikle et al. "Recommendations of committee...," 16 July 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 fi8le 400-2-3 pt. 3].

In fact, "undertrained and insufficient park wardens" had been cited as yet another factor responsible for the deterioration of game and fur species in the park. Therefore, it was necessary to enlarge and upgrade the warden staff, providing for a minimum of four park wardens and twelve game wardens (fromthe earlier numbers of two park wardens, two game wardens, and six laborers) (J. P. Richards, "Wild life administration and supervision WBP," 14 Sept. 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). One government official pointed out that it was more important to reorganize and improve the communication network than simply to increase the number of wardens. He asked, "Is it not the fact that pressure is being brought to bear to create positions for men being returned from the armed services?" (letter from H. L. Holman, Dist. Forest Officer, to R. A. Gibson, 22 Oct. 1945, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A).

[10] At the beginning of the 1940s, the number of bison killed was 30, with 10 going to each of the missions at Fort Chipewyan and Fort Smith and 10 to Indian Affairs in Fort Chipewyan for relief. The 30 bison represented about 6,000 pounds of meat (memo from A. L. Cumming to R. A. Gibson, 29 Nov. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3; memo from Director to Cumming, 14 Nov. 1940, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). The number of bison allowed to be slaughtered annually was set by the NWT Council, and any official changes in the annual slaughter required Council approval (telegram from R. A. Gibson to M. Meikle, 22 Oct. 1943, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). Nevertheless, the number of bison slaughtered increased in the 1940s from this modest figure to a high of 65 or 69 until 1948, consisting entirely of mature and old bulls (various correspondence, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2; field journal 1978). Indian subsistence needs were one reason for the increase; the other was increased need by the mission.

The mission schools required more bison meat because of their increasing enrollments, a factor which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Its impact on the bison slaughters was plain: the Chipewyan school required fifteen bison, not ten, for the 1944-45 season, due to "...the larger number of children in attendance at that point during the present school year" (letter from A. Mansoz to M. Meikle, 22 Spet. 1944, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). The Holy Angels school had been approved for 60 Indian students, an increase from the previous figure of 40, necessitating the larger amount of meat (letter from E. Picard to M. Meikle, 30 Aug. 1944, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). Each new request was scrutinized carefully, because the park recognized that an increased harvest could easily become the norm and would be hard to reduce in later years (memo from A. L. Cumming to R. A. Gibson, 19 Oct. 1943, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2).

To its credit, the park administration continued to refuse "numerous requests" to allow bison sportshunting (cf. letter from L. E. Drummond, Agent, to R. A. Gibson, 25 July 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). However, Oldham suggested that sportshunting would be one way to reduce park expenses: he estimated that twenty hunters charged $600 each would provide the park with $12,000 gross and $10,000 after $2,000 expenses (letter from E. G. Oldham to R. A. Gibson, 28 Dec. 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). Gibson refused:

> You realize, of course, that when the park was established as a reserve for the buffalo a number of local residents were denied the privilege of hunting and trapping over that territory. These persons would consider they have prior rights over non-residents in the matter of the hunting of buffalo if after investigation it was found that the idea might be feasible and profitable [letter from Gibson to Oldham, 11 Jan. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2].

As well, the park administration refused to allow hunting of bison to supply meat to summer road construction camps in 1947 (letter from E. G. Oldham to R. A. Gibson, 9 Oct. 1946; memo from A. L. Cumming to Gibson, 25 Oct. 1946; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1097 file 472-3 pt. 2). This road construction was probably the proposed road from Hay Camp to the Fitzgerald road. The warden staff was too busy to work on the road at that time, and they expected to receive some equipment from the Americans (memo from M. J. Dempsey to N. W. Champagne, 27 March 1944, PAC RG 85 . 339 file 208). The purpose of this road was "...to provide a passable means of communication to facilitate supervision of the park by the warden staff" (memo from R. A. Gibson to E. G. Oldham, 11 March 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 339 file 208).

[11] Serious fires burned the park in later years, most recently in the late 1970s, 30 to 35 years following the fires in the mid 1940s. These fires could probably have been controlled by the reintroduction of controlled burning. Instead, forest fire control allowed the buildup of ground litter that would feed these destructive fires, again destroying trapping and hunting resources and threatening the economic livelihood of many park trappers. Unless controlled burning is begun or extremely large amounts are budgeted for fire-fighting, forest fires in the park will probably occur in similar cycles in the future, with the next major episode expected around the turn of the century.

CHAPTER 6

THE FUR TRADE MODE OF PRODUCTION: PERSISTENCE AND STRESS

The two preceding chapters have discussed the expansion of the state (federal and provincial) into the north, the arrival of entrepreneurs, and the consequent underdevelopment of Fort Chipewyan Natives, because of their loss of control over and access to the local means of production. This chapter considers the local social and political impact of these developments. Remarkably, the fur trade mode of production persisted through 30 years of continual hardship. It was subjected during these years to increasing stress, not only because of economic problems faced by the Native peoples, but also because of the role played by the Indian Agent in the lives of status Indians. Whether positive or negative, his actions served to undermine Indian political structures and the integrity of Indian societies.

These stresses intensified the internal conflicts characteristic of the fur trade mode of production. Indians faced conflicts between pressures to adhere to the traditional lifestyle with its communal ethic and economic pressures to intensify fur trade production and to act in one's self-interest rather than group interest. They responded to some of their difficulties by using ethnicity as an adaptive feature. These three decades saw ethnic distinctions grow between delta and park Chipewyan and ethnic convergence occur between bush Natives and town Métis, because of changes in town life, when non-Natives or Whites became more numerous and began squeezing out Métis workers, when wage-labor opportunities in general declined, and when class barriers grew. Such cultural convergence set the stage for later ethnic convergence after the Indians abandoned the bush settlements.

Indicators of serious social disruption among Indians, such as drinking and "vagrancy," are visible at the end of the period. Ultimately, Indian efforts to resolve their dilemma would result in the transformation of their mode of production to a "wage labor" or "proletarianized" mode of production in the 1950s and 1960s. This process of resolution and transformation is discussed in the final chapters. It would be the underlying cause of Natives abandoning the bush settlements and moving into town.

KAIYAS: A WAY OF LIFE "LONG AGO"

Underlying the fur trade mode of production was an adaptive strategy based on winter hunting and trapping and summer hunting and fishing, with occasional summer wage labor. This pattern was established in the 19th century. Detailed information about Native lifestyle and the composition and location of local bands is available for the post World War I period from published and archival reminiscences (Rourke n.d.; Godsell 1959; PAA Crawley 1939; Nieman 1980b; Baker 1976) and from interviews conducted by Parker (1978; 1979) and the author (field journals 1975; 1977; 1978; 1980; McCormack 1978; cf. specific individuals cited). Native elders and non-Native, long-term residents of Fort Chipewyan, all now in their 50s or older, were interviewed. They were young adults in the 1920s and 1930s, so they speak with authority about their lives in this period. They commented on life in the bush and on changes in that lifestyle. The oral testimony and the printed accounts are the bases for the composite picture presented here.

The annual round of activities for Indians and bush Métis was divided into four major periods: summer hunting, fishing, and occasional wage labor, fall preparation for winter, winter hunting and trapping, and spring trapping and waterfowl hunting. Tanner (1966) points out the interrelatedness of these various productive activities. Each season's activities were essential components of the whole subsistence cycle: "a [Native] trapper can only neglect any of these activities if he is giving up the trapping life altogether" (Tanner 1966:17).

Summer: Visit to Fort Chipewyan

The coming of summer was both the beginning of and an end to the annual cycle of events. It was a time for the winter fur trade debts to be settled. Chipewyan and Cree Indians renewed their treaty agreements with the Indian Agent, and they reaffirmed old Native alliances and initiated new ones through marriage. They also began the production of the coming winter's food and supplies.

Summer began with the breakup of the major rivers, usually in early to mid May, allowing people to travel to Fort Chipewyan with the product of the spring hunt of muskrats and possibly beaver, if the season were open. A few people might arrive in town before breakup. If the weather were still cold, they might "...camp with friends or in empty shacks, or if they consider the weather to be fitting they put up their tents..." (Rourke n.d.:243). However, travel was difficult and sometimes dangerous once the snow and ice had begun to thaw, and it was easier to move families in boats powered by small outboard motors, or "kickers."[1]

Although Jean Godsell, the wife of a HBC clerk, commented on the birchbark canoes of the Chipewyan and Caribou Eater Indians at Fort Chipewyan in the fall of 1921 (1959:32), in fact paddling or rowing was obsolescent by that date. The fur trade prosperity of the 1920s allowed trappers to purchase motors, which they put on locally built boats (Rourke n.d.:239). An entry for July in the 1923 Anglican Mission diary reads, "'Every Indian seems to have a kicker'" (PAA Crawley 1939:54). Rourke, writing about the 1924-26 period, observed that "small gasoline engines...are now in general use amongst the natives as well as the white people of the North..." (n.d.:235):

> ...few self-respecting Indians paddle a canoe in those days. Through the advertisement pages of the various magazines that find their way into the North he has long ago discovered the magic of the small engine....In a great many places throughout the North the canoe is now only used as a "safety" boat to the small motor-driven craft now so much in use. They are usually towed behind the motor-launches, and are, of course, very necessary when landing in shallow water. ...
>
> ...I think there was scarcely a trapper at Fort Chipewyan who had not some sort of engine which he could attach to his boat...[*ibid*.:239].

Evinrude was the most common brand in the early days (cf. Baker 1976: 164). Outboard motors revolutionized summer and fall travel, and they must have become indispensable almost overnight. They also required large expenditures of capital, which would have been relatively easy in the affluent 1920s and even into the 1930s, especially for Indians from the park. Such expenditures would have been difficult to make in the 1940s, and they were probably one factor encouraging men to seek wage labor opportunities. By the 1940s, the local people excelled in repairing motors (Hamdon 1978), another response to a shortage of cash.

At Fort Chipewyan, the trappers traded their furs, paid off their debts, and obtained the supplies they needed for the summer, both foodstuffs and other commodities. Their ability to pay their debts at this time influenced the amount of credit they obtained in the fall. Credit continued to be used extensively throughout this period, although trappers found it difficult to obtain adequate amounts after about 1944. There was little cash in Fort Chipewyan until World War II, and people bartered furs for trade goods, directly or through the credit system (cf. Rourke n.d.:277). This system allowed the trader to charge higher prices to Indians than to Whites, a practice common in the 1920s:

> In retailing goods to Indians throughout the North it is usual to charge special "Indian prices," which compare very unfavourably with prices charged to others...[Rourke n.d.:108; cf. Baker 1976:42].

Rourke pointed out that Indians were aware of this custom in the 1920s and that they considered it to be unjust (Rourke n.d.:108).

Alan Hamdon, who took over his father's post in Fort Chipewyan in 1944, described the process of trade and "settling up" of accounts. The traders outfitted the Indian trappers through the previous year (see discussion below). Then, after breakup,

> ...when he came back he brought you his fur. He wouldn't just give it to you, by the way. You still had to bid on it. You didn't have to bid on all of them, but some of them you had to. But, he brought his fur to you. If he thought you'd give him a fair price, that was the end of the deal. You told him how much the fur was, and if he said "uh huh," you would tell him how much he owes you, which he already knew anyway, because you'd give him the bills, and you'd subtract it, and if he had money coming, he'd probably take some cash, and he'd leave the rest... [Hamdon 1978].

Entire families dealt with a particular trader: "Primarily if the old man dealt with you, the boys did [too]" (Hamdon 1978). Both men and women would barter furs, at least in the 1920s (Godsell 1959:72), so a woman's fur production remained her own property.

This sale of furs coincided with the arrival of the first boat of the season, always an exciting occasion and eagerly anticipated by people in Fort Chipewyan (cf. inter alia Rourke n.d.:246). Hamdon recalls, "When the first boat arrived, you could smell that boat, I'm sure, from miles up the river. You'd smell those oranges." The fruit smelled "fantastic" after ten months without an orange or banana (Hamdon 1978). The shelves of the traders were restocked with a year's worth of goods. Godsell described the Fort Chipewyan HBC store in 1921:

> The shelves literally groaned beneath a miscellaneous assortment of blue and scarlet strouds, gay tartans that would have knocked a Scot's eyes out, ginghams, gaudy silk scarves, glittering dime-store "diamonds" and trinkets of all kinds; box upon box of the lovely silk thread the native women use for their colourful embroidery, tea, dried apricots, prunes, twists of black tobacco, and ammunition enough to start a fair-sized war. Depending from the beams were rows of gleaming copper kettles, the ones so popular on the trail since they could be nested one within the other - and now [1950s?] no longer obainable - while, stacked along one wall in orderly array, there were scores of guns from ancient muzzleloaders to modern breechlocks [1959:36].

Cloth for clothing was an important trade item, since aboriginal clothing had been abandoned in the 19th century or earlier except for moccasins and mitts. Godsell referred to "tartan-clad squaws" (1959: 32) in 1921, while Rourke described male and female costumes in 1924-26: the Indian women "invariably" wore "...a black cashmere shawl about their shoulders, and moccasins, worked in brightly coloured silk or beadwork, upon their feet..." (n.d.:66). Nieman said that the women and girls all wore fancy, printed calico dresses (1980a). Rourke continued: the men also wore moccasins and had

> ...gaudily decorated moose-skin gloves; in every other respect their dress,except for an occasional moose-skin waistcoat [vest or short jacket] here and there, was the summer attire of the labourer type in any small village of England or America n.d.:69].

Nieman described this attire as white shirts and navy blue trousers (1980a). Rourke commented on what she viewed as an anomaly, but which showed how fur had become a commodity:

> ...the extraordinary part of the whole [fur trapping]

> business is that there, in the very centre of the fur industry, it was the exception, rather than the rule, for fur to be worn, except as a trimming for "artegie" or "parka" collars [n.d.:274].

Indians' tastes changed, due to increased contact with outsiders and to access to outside merchants through the newly introduced Eaton's mail order catalogues, which did good business (Godsell 1959:200-1).[2] Rourke commented,

> So keen were many of the Indian women to wear only the most correct "white" clothes that they took great pains to copy every detail of the dresses worn by the white women in the Settlement...[n.d.:86].

Another expensive piece of capital equipment, the sewing machine, had become necessary for sewing clothes and tents (cf. Nieman 1980a).

The people's needs for the summer were few, mainly foodstuffs, clothing, outboard motors, and gas for the motors. One woman described the shopping she and her husband would do:

> When the husband used to trap, he made good money sometimes. He give you so much, when you first get in town, after he sells his fur. You could buy clothing for your children. And after that, all the money he makes he keeps it to himself, that's for kicker, parts for the kicker, gas, when we go someplace, and groceries [McCormack 1978].

Hamdon remembers,

> They would buy primarily fruit, sweet food like canned jam and peaches and pears and plums, and very very light, like tobacco, very light needs, tea....That was when you'd sell... those spring dresses, for the ladies, the cotton dresses, oh, they used to love that, and the men would buy a new pair of pants, something like that, socks. But they bought very little ...because they really didn't need much. Number one, they were going to live in a tent, permanently, like for the whole summer, and they didn't have to worry about a stove, very little [was bought] [1978].

By the 1940s, when many of the fur bearers which were trapped in winter had decreased in number, the spring muskrat and beaver hunts were important. Hamdon recalls that people "...were not being frivolous; they were buying bare necessities" (1978). There was a minimum amount which they needed, and they would never buy less (ibid.). Consequently,

> It is unknown to be out of debt, and the traders keep sharp eyes on their clients to see that they do not swap their business to some other trader. It is a heavy temptation to hold out a few muskrat skins for such delicacies as Dan's [Mah] bread and ice cream, and it is often done [Gillham 1947:18].

Treaty Day

Following their dealings with the traders, people lingered in Fort Chipewyan waiting for the treaty observances in June. Status Indians were paid an annuity of five dollars each, and they were given "rations": one woman remembers 25 pounds of flour and bacon, salt pork, tea, sugar, and oatmeal (McCormack 1978; cf. Rourke n.d.:254). The amount of rations increased in the 1940s, when Indian Affairs was providing rations for people facing the difficulties of the fur trade. "Treaty Day," as it has been known since at least the 1960s, was an opportunity for the Indian Agent to meet formally with the members of the Chipewyan and Cree bands, to hear their complaints and promise to investigate them or, if possible, take action, and to pay them the annuity.

This early summer gathering at Fort Chipewyan was the occasion for a major annual celebration. It was rooted in aboriginal Indian practices: the end of winter was often an isolated and hungry time for northern hunters, who were often scattered into small groups to maximize their chances of finding game (cf. McCormack 1975:108-110). Breakup heralded the summer period, which was usually free from the threat of starvation. People gathered together in large numbers at traditional locations. There they danced, visited, and rearranged local band composition. When they had become involved in the fur trade, they abandoned traditional locations for the fur trade posts, and they incorporated trade and other dealings with Europeans into their activities at that time. This ingathering was the only time during the year that all the diverse peoples of the region came together. Indians from other regions might also attend: Rourke says that there were Blackfoot Indians camping on the shores of Lake Athabasca when she was there in the 1920s (n.d.:257).

The celebrations sometimes lasted a "fortnight" in the 1920s (Rouke n.d.:257). People brought a variety of musical instruments: concertinas, fiddles, mouth-organs, drums, and gramophones (ibid.) Rourke thought that the fiddle was the "favourite instrument" among the Natives, but

> When the fiddle fails there is always the gramophone, and there are few Indian families who do not possess their little portable "tin of music" - as I once heard an Indian describe the instrument [ibid.:236].

The Indian drum accompanied hand-games and dances, which were important parts of any celebration. Although one informant believed that only Chipewyans played hand-games and only Crees danced (Parker 1979), Lowie observed Chipewyans dancing, and Crees did play hand-games. However, they may not have engaged in these activities jointly in the 1920s, when they were still antagonistic toward one another. Descriptions of dances from the 1920s suggest that there were at least two major types, a "handkerchief" dance (Rourke n.d.:200; cf. Nieman 1980b:35-36) or a "give-away" dance (Godsell 1959:155), which is not seen today, and a "step dance" similar to present day dancing (Nieman 1980a), which is called a "tea" or "drum" dance.[4,5] Nieman remembered 30 to 40 dancers taking part (1980a), and there may have been more. People in Fort Chipewyan claim that there were so many dancers that they had to form two circles, one inside the other. They remember the dances as a time of great enjoyment and heightened sociability (field journals 1977; 1978).

People did a lot of visiting as part of this summer celebration. Women from different areas would visit one another in small groups (McCormack 1978). It allowed for an exchange of ideas and information, as well as for the redefinition of social arrangements, primarily through the arranging of marriages, which both confirmed former alliances and began new ones.

Marriage

The practice of arranged marriage continued through the 1940s and probably until people moved into town in the mid 1950s (McCormack 1978; field journals 1977; 1978). Girls were chaperoned closely, because an unplanned liaison which resulted in pregnancy could hinder a suitable marriage.[6] One woman claimed that a man gave a woman to another (field journal 1977 V:29), while another explained, "You see, long ago, young people, they're not boss of themself. You never have boyfriend" (McCormack 1978). This woman's marriage to a man she did not know had been arranged for her by her grandfather, who was a "headman" of the settlement. Her husband lived in another part of the area to which her family would later move. Her grandfather said "o.k., o.k.," and she had no choice: "I didn't like him; I don't know him; I'm scared to say no" (McCormack 1978). Girls were often unhappy with the choices made for them, but they had no choice (field journal 1978 VII:63; other entries). First marriages were socially too important to be left to the whims of the young people concerned.

In the early 1940s, the increasing Chipewyan-Cree closeness in

Wood Buffalo Park which ended in the Chipewyans changing their band affiliation to Cree was reflected in some marriages between park Chipewyan women and Cree men. Both the younger sister of the woman mentioned above and another woman married Cree men in 1942. The next year, there was a marriage between a Cree widower and a Chipewyan widow. Interestingly, no marriages were recorded for 1944, the year the legal shift occurred; perhaps people were waiting to see what developed before registering new relationships.

Women and men had more freedom to choose their own spouses in second marriages (cf. field journal 1978 VII:63). It was common for widows and widowers to marry, although a man left with children might also seek out a young, childless wife (AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.; field journals 1977; 1978). Widows sometimes chose to come to Fort Chipewyan rather than remarry, since they could obtain some support from the Indian Agent (cf. PAA Head, Melling, Stewart). This may have reflected not just the availability of social assistance, but also the desire not to be forced into a marriage simply to survive, which was often the case in earlier times. That is, once Indian Affairs provided assistance to widows with children, some women chose to move to town and take advantage of it rather than remain in the bush and be forced to remarry. Also, in the later part of this period, when food was scarce, widows may have been liabilities to the local groups rather than assets. Some widows did choose to remain in the bush, however, trapping and hunting on their husband's line until their children were old enough to obtain licences and trap in their own names. They held the lines for the children, rather than working them on their own behalf. Park officials did not envisage women holding lines in their own right, in spite of the fact that women commonly hunted and trapped. Women and children were considered by officials to be part of the father's or husband's economic unit.

All marriages were solemnized by the priests, either at Fort Chipewyan in the summer or during one of the priest's trips to the bush settlements, if a marriage had been initiated at another time. Considerable social and religious pressure was put on couples to stay together, even when the marriage was unhappy (field journals 1977; 1978; McCormack 1978).

Summer Hunting and Fishing: Preparation for Fall

Following the summer festivities, people returned to the bush. However, no one lived in the bush settlements in the summer. Many stayed at Quatre Fourches, about seven miles west of town, to fish and make dry fish. This number may have increased in the 1940s, when restrictions were placed on moose hunting in the park and when people became more dependent on fish or rations supplied by the Indian Agent. People at Quatre Fourches had easy access to the Agent, his rations, as well as information about jobs, if any.

Most families, especially in earlier years, headed farther into the bush to fish and hunt all summer, usually in small extended family units. They hunted moose, which in hot weather are driven out of the thicker bush by the flies to take refuge in the lakes and streams and where they are easy to find. Good hunters would also pursue them into the bush when necessary (field journals 1977). One man claimed that the people know where a moose will be, though he did not explain whether he meant by supernatural means or the pragmatic keen eye for biological and environmental detail that northern hunters possess.

Summer was a nomadic season, within certain general territorial limits. People were on the move all summer as they fed themselves and put up dried food. They established temporary butchering and fishing camps, with berry-picking camps in the late summer. one woman described her activities in the mid 1930s until 1955, when she moved into town:

> In the summer now we used to stay along the river, stay about one or two weeks one place. When there was no moose or anything, we used to move someplace else. All summer long [McCormack 1978].

The man would kill a moose on a hunt, and the next day, his group would all travel to the site of the kill, which usually meant walking into the bush, "packing" or carrying everything from babies to cooking supplies on the backs of the people and pack dogs. Older children were able to help, and even the smallest child carried a blanket or two. The women would first "cut" the meat; that is, cut it into thin strips which were hung on a pole in the sun or over a slow, smoky fire to dry, making "dry meat." They would then flesh and dehair the hide, turning it into a "parchment" hide by night. One man, commenting on the speed with which the women worked, said with some exaggeration that a moose could be killed in the morning and the women would have new moccasins ready by night. The dry meat and hides might be carried back out of the bush, or they might be stored in caches or "stages," protected from mice below by angled-out bark and from ravens above by logs. If it were cached, the men would bring the meat to the settlement in the winter using dog teams (McCormack 1978; field journals 1977 II:26; III:31-46; IV:1-2; 1978 VIII:7,32-33). A successful summer was one in which there was ample fish and moose for immediate consumption, as well as for good supplies of dry fish and dry meat for the fall freeze-up period, when bush movement was restricted and people were busy with winter preparations, and for winter stores. At the end of the summer, the people should also have a supply of moose hides ready for the final tanning stages, if that had not already been done.

Wage Labor

In summers when there was little game or following a poor trapping season, the men went looking for wage labor, especially after 1944. The decreased availability of game, the restrictions imposed on moose hunting in the park in the 1940s, and the difficulties in obtaining adequate credit were important contributing factors. Wages could be turned into food and into capital equipment - outboard motors, sewing machines, rifles - and other commodities which were now necessary for the bush production process, summer and winter. Because of the generally low wages paid laborers and the soaring prices of store foods and other goods in the 1940s, the foods obtained with cash were not nutritionally equivalent to the bush foods. They were higher in starches and sugars and lower in protein, vitamins, and minerals, especially when bannock, a type of baking powder biscuit, replaced meat and fish as a staple. People got very tired of a steady diet of fish, and they may have turned to these purchased foods when they could not get wild meat. Hildred Rawson commented about these dietary shifts for 1945:

> The diet of the Indian people is changing from all meat to meat and cereals and store foods generally. The children are under-nourished in the opinion of the agent. A mother will buy a tin of milk for the baby - but she doesn't know how to use it. She will give the baby all of it at once - then none for a long while [n.d.:5; cf. Rourke n.d.: 209].

Park administrators may have contributed to this situation, because officials appeared not to understand the complexities of the Indians' annual cycle. They expected the Indians to live on fish all summer. Evidently they did not recognize the need for advance preparation for the winter season which the summer activities included.

Unfortunately, there was little wage labor compatible with bush activities in the 1940s. Before the steamboats were replaced with diesels, men could spend some of their summer cutting wood for the boats (cf. Rourke n.d.:64). Wood camps and wood cutting disappeared as river transport modernized. The people were caught in a double bind. On the one hand, they needed certain equipment to allow them to hunt and fish during the summer in order to support themselves at that time and to put up the stores of food needed to lessen the precariousness of the winter months. On the other, if wage labor were available only in Fort Chipewyan or out of the region, they might be able to buy some or all of the equipment they needed, but they would not be in the bush to hunt. Men could not both work for wages and hunt for moose, and laborer wages were not sufficient to support families without bush food supplements.

Despite these problems, the need for cash was great, because men did leave the bush for jobs when they were available, leaving women in fishing camps in the bush. In this way, a supply of dry fish could be made. Rourke commented on the competence of the women in the 1920s:

> ...his womenfolk are very competent, and their skill with the hunting knife is frequently equal to that of the men; so, even if the menfolk be away for many moons, no great calamity is likely to befall the camp or settlement during their absence [n.d.:107].

One woman explained how her mother-in-law could do anything: "Nothing was too hard for her" (field journal 1977 V:31). Women snared rabbits, hunted grouse, and occasionally shot moose, though with less frequency than when the men were with them. These activities were traditional ones for women. They strengthened the women's position within the local band and made them less economically dependent on the men, and more on one another.

Fall: Preparation for Winter

Fishing, berry-picking, and hunting continued into the fall, with people still living in temporary camps. They moved now to take advantage of the southward waterfowl migration to increase their food supplies. They hunted and preserved swans, geese, and ducks, all passing through the Peace-Athabasca delta, which is located on a major North American flyway, in large flocks. Godsell recalled as many as 300 "wavies" or geese being taken by a single hunter at one time in the fall (or spring - see below) (1959:28). One particularly tasty method of preservation was to split the birds down the middle and pack them in layers of coarse salt. They would then be stored in a hole dug out where the ground was cold (field journal 1977 III:89; McCormack 1978). Ducks and geese were also smoked, which entailed cutting them like dry meat (McCormack 1978). If it were late enough, the birds could simply be frozen (cf. Godsell 1959: 28). Birds were hunted despite the restrictions of the Migratory Birds Convention:

> The people of the North were of the opinion that the Migratory Birds Convention between the States and Canada imposed upon them a hardship which was particularly unfair, when taking into consideration their isolated position [Rourke n.d.:287].

Fish were put up for winter dog food at this time, which meant hanging them on a stick, ungutted, and leaving them to dry on racks, producing "hang-fish" or "stick-fish." One man put up 300 "sticks" of fish, of ten fish per stick, to feed his five dogs for the winter (field journal 1977 II:51). Whitefish were usually used. Jackfish River was the location of a fall goldeye fishery (field journal 1978

VIII:7).

Women and children collected berries for jam as well as for mixing with pounded dry meat and grease in pemmican (Parker 1978; Nieman 1980a; field journals 1977; 1978). Pemmican was used in the winter as a quick meal or when running after toboggans (Nieman 1980a); it was a high energy, lightweight, concentrated food source. People who had gardens (such as at Birch River) would harvest the usual crop of potatoes (McCormack 1978). Fall was a time to haul in firewood which had been cut in the spring and drying all summer: "In the winter they didn't cut wood," said one woman (ibid.). They manufactured winter moccasins, mitts, and other items not purchased, such as snowshoes and snares, and they repaired equipment (field journals 1977; 1978).

The Fall Outfit

Families, or sometimes only the men, would visit the traders in Fort Chipewyan in the fall to obtain the fall outfits; that is, the goods which would take them over the winter, but especially to Christmas (Hamdon 1978; field journal 1977 III:31). The traders might purchase some of the meat and fish the Indians had preserved: they would buy meat for their own consumption and fish for their dogs. They also purchased fish for resale later to the Indians when they came to town in the winter. They bought fish for ten cents a piece, or one dollar per stick.[7] The Indians would buy the fish back at the rate of eight to a dollar (12.5¢ per fish) (Hamdon 1978). The traders also purchased moosehides from the Indians for resale to other Indians in the area (ibid.). The sale of essential bush foods and products reflected Indian needs for increased exchange value.

Hamdon described the fall outfits:

> You supplied him in the fall...with their traps and their tea and tobacco and flour and food stuffs and maybe a new tent and maybe new snowshoes and definitely shells, possibly a new rifle. You would outfit him with all the supplies he would require between September the 1st and December the 20th or so, which is when they came back. And at that time he went out and did his fall trapping...[1978].

An average outfit for one family contained about 100 pounds of flour, five to seven pounds tea, twenty pounds lard, a little canned fruit, jam, salt, four to six cans of tobacco, cigarette papers, two to four dozen new traps, possibly a new tent made of canvas duck, winter clothing (fleece-lined long underwear, sometimes parkas), duffle and stroud, sometimes snowshoes, though many people made their own. There would also be tallow for mixing with fish and meat (and, later, corn meal) for dog food. "They didn't need a lot of variety of food, because their meat and fish come off the land." Hamdon commented,

> I remember putting the stuff on the counter, and I was thinking to myself, these people are literally going to live on this little pile of groceries for two months. For crying out loud, we'd eat it in a week [1978].

The fall outfit cost about $400-500 for everything in the mid 1940s (ibid.).

Life in the Winter Settlements

People tried to be at their winter settlements before freeze-up, which occurred in October-November. They lived in log cabins in the bush; tents were used only for travelling, including when running the trapline. Women usually stayed in these settlements with their children; the families did not accompany the men on the traplines (Soper 1978; Rourke n.d.:52; Allan 1978; McCormack 1978; field journal 1977 VI:1-2). Occasionally when women would accompany their husbands trapping, they would leave babies and young children with old ladies (field journal 1977 III:31), but it was rare for entire families to go out (but cf.

Allan 1978).

Rourke believed that living in the cabins was unhealthy:

> Unfortunately the Indian seems to think that it is a sign of progress to inhabit a stuffy little shack in preference to a tepee or wigwam...[n.d.:159].
>
> The natural consequence is that many of them die off from tuberculous complaints...[*ibid*.:52].
>
> The women are the chief sufferers, for they are compelled to spend many long days in their ill-ventilated homes throughout the long winter months, while the men are out on the trails engaged in trapping and hunting, and during these occupations they spend a great deal of time camping in the open air [*ibid*.].

Some of these cabins are reported to have been relatively spatious, despite Rourke's observations. There were two story structures at Birch River, Peace River, Big Point, and possibly other locations (McCormack 1978; field journals 1977; 1978).

Men spent the winter trapping and hunting. They used dog teams of five to seven dogs to run their traplines. Five dogs could pull a load of 400-600 pounds (Rourke n.d.:269). "Really good" dogs were worth up to $500 in the 1920s during the winter, although $100 was the more usual winter price (*ibid*.:261). Rourke noted that there was some experimentation with motor-sleighs while she was in Fort Chipewyan, but that they were not yet practical, due to problems of insufficient supplies of "petrol" and ease of repair. She predicted that they would be an important innovation in the future (*ibid*.:240-1), which they proved to be during the 1960s and later. Men would often be on the trap-line for two weeks, returning to the bush settlement for about a week to process the pelts (McCormack 1978). They made occasional visits to a trader, sometimes going to Fort Chipewyan. Women rarely accompanied them except to the local bush trading post.

Women drove dogs as well, and they did some hunting and trapping, usually in the vicinity of the settlement (field journal 1977 VI:24; cf. Asch 1977). They snared hares:

> ...the men leave the snaring of hares to the squaws. They deem it's below their dignity. They go out after moose and caribou [Soper 1978].

Women also hunted larger game. Rourke recorded that she was nearly caught in a bear trap which an Indian woman had set one fall (n.d.:226). Women's hunting and trapping activities were almost certainly curtailed in the 1930s and 1940s with the depletion of game and the increasing restrictions imposed by park and provincial officials. Women prepared hides and did all the skinning (Soper 1978), and they also did the domestic chores of sewing, cooking, carrying water, and childcare. Older children were very helpful in assisting with these tasks. Women remember working very hard, but at the same time "the people really lived long ago good - no welfare" (McCormack 1978).

The bush settlements were high sociable. With men gone much of the time, women had to rely on their own skills and on the assistance of their older children and the other women in the settlement. A woman's mother or mother-in-law was an especially important source of instruction and aid (McCormack 1978). Women visited one another within the small settlements; they were all related as consanguineal or affinal kin. When the men were back from the trapline, there would be drum dances and fiddle dances, and people would play handgames and other games (McCormack 1978; Allan 1978; Rourke n.d.:107). The locations and compositions of these settlements are discussed below.

Throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s tripping was the accepted way for families in the bush to obtain additional supplies and sell some of their furs. Also, families, though sometimes only the men or parents, would visit Fort Chipewyan for Christmas and New Year's. Christmas was a festive occasion, another time for celebration, though on a smaller scale than in the summer. Many authors have commented on the observances of this holiday, which involved formalized visiting and the giving of small gifts, religious observances, welcoming the New Year, and dancing (cf. _inter alia_ Godsell 1959; Rourke n.d.; McCormack 1978; field journals 1977; 1978). Christmas divided the winter season into two parts: the pre-Christmas or "fall" trapping season and the post-Christmas season, which included the very cold months of January and February and lasted into March. The people picked up another outfit for the second part which was mostly food and "fill-in" for equipment needing replacement (Hamdon 1978).

Spring

Spring begins in the north with the return of the warm sun in March. It was the season for cutting a supply of firewood for the following winter (McCormack 1978). Families or the men alone would visit Fort Chipewyan at Easter to make their Easter devotions and to get a small spring outfit for the muskrat and beaver trapping season. People bought little for the spring hunt. "They'd spring for some coffee for the spring hunt; it was a very big deal and they'd want to celebrate" (Hamdon 1978). As the smaller creeks and sloughs began to thaw, families left the winter settlements and moved to the muskrat grounds. In April, 1923, a trader observed,

> I met a group of Cree Indians, who had moved there [to Lake Mamawi] for the muskrat hunt, men, women and children, travelling slowly with toboggans loaded and all of them walking [Baker 1976:108].

People lived in tents at this time of year. Although Godsell reported only "conical lodges" in Fort Chipewyan in 1921 (1959:32), by that date they were already obsolete. Hamdon (1978) claims that they abandoned the tipi when Northwest Tent and Awning (Edmonton) started making wall tents, which the traders sold. They also sold canvas, which was made into tents by poorer families. Rourke observed,

> The Chief of the Crees used a tepee, as did some of the councillors of the Blackfoot tribe [?], but most of the people brought bell-shaped and square tents similar to those used by soldiers when camping out [n.d.:257].

Nieman, discussing the same period, recalled,

> They don't make their tents. They have so much money that they can afford to buy their new tents from the Hudson [*sic*] Bay Company [1980a].

He described the tents as having a three foot wall and being about ten feet by twelve feet in floor dimensions for an average family (*ibid*.). There might be an airtight heater inside the tent in cold weather, or sometimes a small, flat sheet metal stove (Hamdon 1978).

Men, women, and the older children all hunted muskrats, both for their pelts and for food (McCormack 1978; field journal 1977 VI: 24). A special canoe was used for the hunt, described by Gillham for the early 1940s (1947:24):

> A rat canoe is a boat made by the natives for travel in the marshes as they hunt the muskrats. Barely ten feet long and thirty inches wide, it is the only rival of an Eskimo kayak for tippiness, unseaworthiness and general cussedness. It is almost impossible to shift your chew of tobacco to the other cheek while traveling in one, because such shifting of weight invariably upsets the craft. These canoes have a rib structure made of thin veneer from packing boxes, strengthened with a few strips of willows running lengthwise. The whole thing is covered with eight-ounce canvas and painted. They are about as big as an Alaskan snow-shoe, and almost as seaworthy. A Boy Scout could pack one up Pike's Peak.

Each hunter might have his or her own canoe (McCormack 1978).

Some trappers used their outboard motors to give them an advantage in the muskrat hunt. Rourke wrote,

> ...the trapper soon learns that the most successful man is the one who can get about quickly, and, if his necessity be urgent, he will willingly mortgage his forthcoming "fur catch" in order to secure an engine for his boat [n.d.:240].

The ability to move quickly from one ratting area to another allowed those trappers with motors to increase muskrat production, but at the expense of those trappers who took longer to reach a trapping area. This situation may have contributed to the conflicts in 1934 over the length of the muskrat season.

Spring was also the season for hunting returning waterfowl in defiance of game regulations (Godsell 1959:28-9; Parker 1978). As the section on the 1940s showed, as game and fur became more scarce, the people's need for this traditional foodsource intensified, and they protested against the restrictions of the Migratory Birds Convention. The meat of the spring birds was dried, and they were also boiled for grease (Parker 1978).

Although the trappers would head to Fort Chipewyan soon after breakup, traders would try to forestall them by visiting them in their hunting camps when tripping was still allowed in the park, and presumably until the drought in 1939 outside the park. Rourke referred to "...the 'fur races' which begin so soon as 'open water' appears." The traders all had boats with motors. As Rourke described the situation,

> Not only is the motor-boat greatly in demand by the trapper..., but it is indispensable to the trader who sets out to secure the fur from the trapper on his own ground; and also the little army of "trippers" who engage in this occupation in the trader's behalf [n.d.:241].

Tripping ended when the bush trappers went to Fort Chipewyan to trade their furs.

"Hold-outs"

This annual cycle and the evident dependence of the Indians on trade goods were characteristic of nearly everyone in the Fort Chipewyan region. There were a few "hold-outs," however: people who refused to commit themselves, even as late as the 1920s, to the fur trade mode of production and the dependence which characterized it. Rourke noted that the Fort Chipewyan Indians did not admire these traditionalists; instead, they "...nursed this mistaken sense of superiority towards their forebears" (n.d.:93). In one example,

> Most of our Indians had given up the customary dwelling of the native people, but there was one Chipewyan in our Settlement who absolutely refused to give up her tepee in spite of any ridicule which might be heaped upon her by her relatives. This old lady had a small shack as well as the tepee, but it was in the latter that she really made her home...[Rourke n.d.:159].

Rourke was given another example by her cook, a Métis woman, who told her of "...a fine old Cree Indian..." named "White Feather" who lived alone in the bush. He was over 80 years old (born ca. 1846), and he refused to wear "white" clothes (n.d.:93).

> ...[U]nlike most of the modern "Sitting Bulls" and "Roaring Plains," he had no other name, of the common-or-garden Jacques, Tommy or Henry variety, in the local registrars [ibid.].

That is, he had not been baptized, and Rourke's informant was sure that he was a doomed soul: "'He is a bad Indian; he will go to Hell when he dies,' she said," because he was not Roman Catholic and because "...he went about with his legs bare, of which God could not approve..." (ibid.).

Medicine men were still relatively common and obvious in the 1920s. Both Godsell (1959) and Rourke (n.d.) mention them (cf. Marion Hunter 1936:14). Rourke named "We-kwi-pan" or "Breechclout," a Cree who was reputed to be able to make rain as well as being highly successful at the handgame (n.d.:162). The Crees were reported to have been more difficult to convert to Christianity than the Chipewyans, and to have held out longer against Christian influence, into the 20th century (Parker 1979).

By 1948, there is no longer any mention of such individuals. Although elders still talk about those days and some of the miraculous things done by people with medicine, there is no suggestion that anyone still follows that quasi-aboriginal lifestyle. Indeed, the regulations on hunting and trapping enforced by officials of the park and the province, as well as the declining resource base, probably made such a lifestyle impossible to choose. The transformation from one mode of production to another is both an individual decision and one made by the entire society. Once that decision has been made, it is extremely difficult for one or two individuals to follow a different pattern. Without the support of the larger social group, the individual efforts of a person or isolated family become difficult to sustain over longer time periods, and their children will often adopt the new mode of production.

THE BUSH SETTLEMENTS

People conducted their annual round of activities in traditional land use areas (depicted graphically in fig. 8), generally in the vicinity of their winter settlements (table 7). The location and composition of these bush settlements provide a picture of the distribution and social make-up of the local bands comprising the regional bush population. Father Picard counted 56 settlements when he was stationed in Fort Chipewyan (field journal 1977 IV:69), some containing only a few houses and others very large. Composition was not fixed, in that local band membership tended to shift somewhat from year to year. The bush

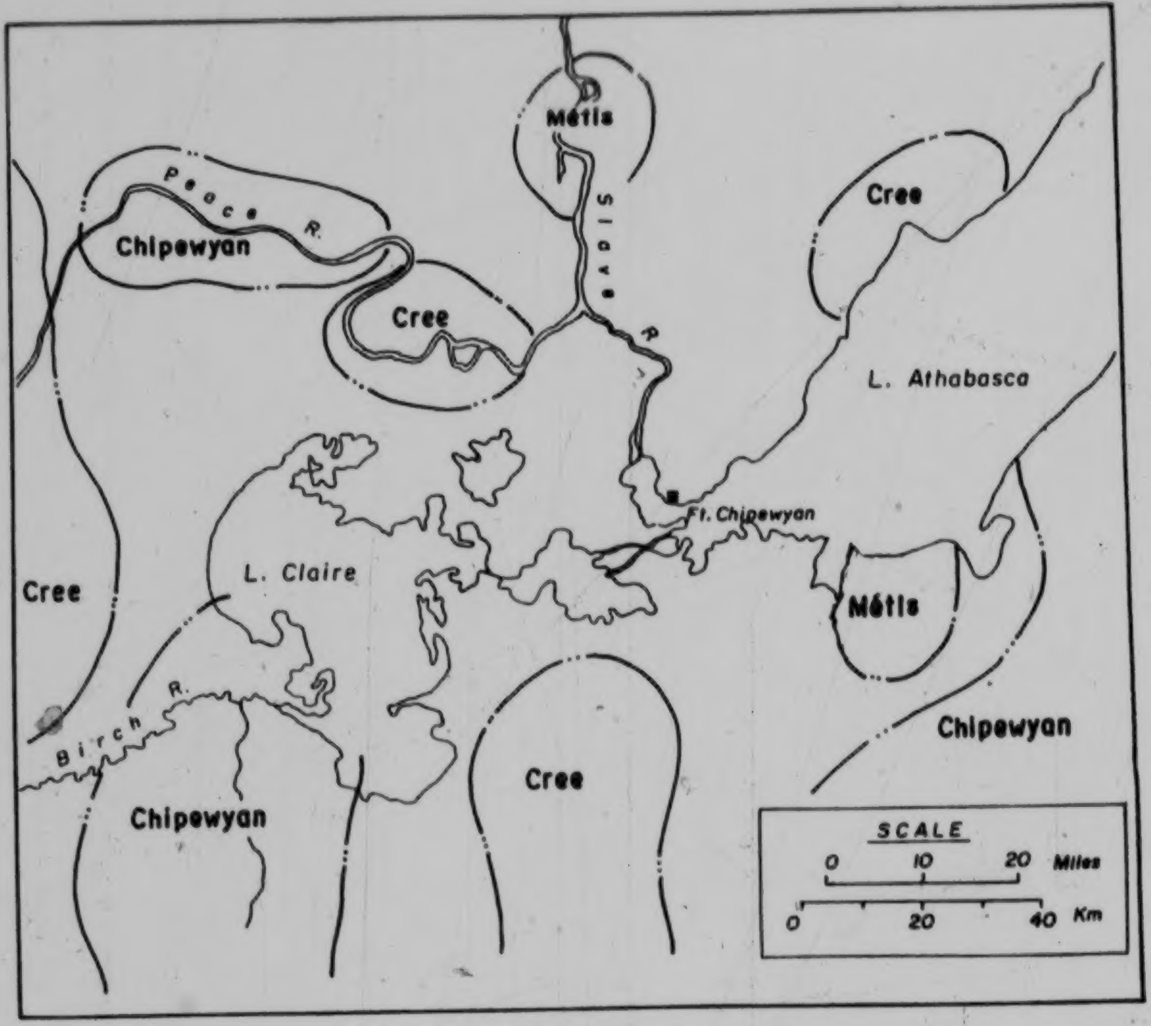
Métis
Peace R.
Chipewyan
Cree
Slave R.
Cree
L. Athabasca
Ft. Chipewyan
L. Claire
Cree
Métis
Birch R.
Chipewyan
Cree
Chipewyan
SCALE
0 10 20 Miles
0 20 40 Km

Figure 8

Traditional
Land-Use Areas

Table 7

Bush Settlements - Fort Chipewyan Region

	Park	Alberta
Chipewyan	Birch River at Lake Claire	Old Fort
	Birch River at Modere Creek	Jackfish (Richardson) Lake
	Big Slough (Peace River)	Big Point
	Peace River - end of trail from Lake Claire	Poplar Point
	Jackfish Creek (River)	Point Brulé
	Peace Point	Lobstick Point
Cree	Big Slough (Peace River)	Little Red River
	Point Providence	Slave River
	Carlson	Big Bay - Cree Lake
	Moose Island	
	Baril (Deep) Creek	
	Rocky Point	
	Rocher River - Little Rapids	
	Baril (Deep) Lake	
	Hay (Prairie) River	
	Gull River	
	Frog Creek	
	Embarras	
	Quatre Fourches	
Lac La Biche Métis		Big Point
		Caribou Island
		Poplar Island

settlements at Birch River were abandoned, and others underwent significant changes during this period.

The groupings which are summarized are not definitive. They leave out many names of individual families; names have been included which seem most representative. As well, names of non-Natives and Métis are not included, except for the Lac La Biche Métis. However, some Métis, who all spoke Cree and who were often related to the Indians, were often members of local bands; the same may have been true of some White trappers after living in the region for many years. A more detailed discussion of local band composition and land use requires an in-depth investigation which is beyond the scope of this study.

Park

The western area of the park was occupied by Crees, with ties to both Fort Vermilion and the lower Peace. They occupied the Little Red River area (Fox Lake Reserve) outside the park, as well as Peace River down to Big Slough, and Ruis Lake. Crees had lived in the area since before the turn of the century (Grouard 1923:277-8), and they had signed Treaty 8. Cameron, travelling up the Peace in 1908, mentioned the camp of Se-weep-i-gons, located where the Swan River enters the Peace, just east of Little Red River (1910:237). A trail connected the Birch and Peace Rivers by means of Ruis Lake (letter from Robt. J. Allan, Jackfish Creek, to M. J. Dempsey, 2 Feb. 1938, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7869 pt. 1).

Family names in the area include Sewepegeham, Grandejambe, Takaro, Antoine, and Kaskamin (the last three are the same family). During the 1930s, they traded at a store operated by Neil Walker at Fifth Meridian, just outside the park boundary (letter from M. J. Dempsey to John A. McDougal, 26 Feb. 1934, PAC RG 85 v. 852 file 7869 pt.

1). While these Crees are beyond the geographic boundaries set for this paper, they were a part of the Fort Chipewyan regional population: they had kinship ties with Crees on the lower Peace and at Big Bay, and some individuals and families moved to the lower Peace River during this period or shortly after.

Chipewyan territory lay to the east of these Crees, on the Peace River from approximately Big Slough to Peace Point, as well as the entire Birch River country. Birch River may have been the original focus of Chipewyan settlement in the southern portion of the park, dating to before the turn of the century (field journal 1977 III:180). There were two major settlements during this period. The one at the mouth of the Birch River contained at least four or five log houses (field journal 1978 VII:26); one person says about twenty houses. It was also the location of the trading posts (field journal 1977 V:11). The second settlement was located up the BirchRiver at Modere Creek. The two settlements were inhabited by families with the names Dzineltti (Vermilion), Djiskelni (Dene), Ennadua Aze/Tthigule (Shortman, L'Hommecourt), Dzenk'a (Ratfat), Piche, and some others (field journal 1977 V:11,30-32). Although Crees occasionally trapped in the Birch River country, informants said that they never lived there.

Chipewyans at Birch River were linked by kin ties to those at Point Brûlé, Poplar Point, Lobstick Point, and Fort MacKay. It was only about 80-90 miles from Birch River to Poplar Point, and people used to travel that way often (field journal 1977 V:47, 69-70). They would also travel over the Birch Mountain to meet people from the Fort MacKay area, who journeyed north to the boundary and even inside the park, albeit illegally. Birch River Chipewyans were related to the Old Fort-Jackfish

Lake Chipewyans, but the creation of the park and the Chipewyan reserve erected major barriers to social interaction.

Apparently the rich Birch River country remained the sole area of Chipewyan activities in the Fort Chipewyan region of the park (with the possible exception of the Simpson family) until a famine which occurred sometime after 1913 (but before 1922). One family relocated to Peace River and Jackfish River and made its home there. The remainder of the Chipewyan relocated there about 1939-42. The reason given for this major geographical movement was the terrible influenza and tuberculosis epidemics which afflicted the region during this period. Epidemics are reported to have caused the very large graveyards at the Birch River settlements (field journal 1977 V:32). Birch River is still associated with sickness for many people, and possibly they abandoned the area as a result of their grief, an old Chipewyan custom (cf. Cameron 1910:111). Another explanation is that pressure was put on the people to leave by the Indian Agent, who was also a physician and may have believed that the area was contaminated (field journal 1977 I:41). Other explanations relate to game availability and park regulations. It was an easy move to the Peace River, through the traditional trail systems. Many men continued to trap at Birch River in the spring, but they now had a second trapping area (field journal 1977 IV:88) on the Peace River.

The area occupied by Chipewyans along the Peace extended from Big Slough to Peace Point. The main settlement and the one which contained the store was Jackfish Creek. There were also settlements at Big Slough, at a narrow section of the Peace River upstream from Jackfish Creek (the Peace River end of a trail connecting to Lake Claire and Birch River), and at Peace Point (the Simpsons) (field journal 1977

IV:88; 1975). Bouchers were also members of these settlements, and at some point they were joined by a Courteoreille family (Cree), which married into the Chipewyan families.

The eastern portion of the park was Cree, divided into northern and southern sectors. The northern sector extended along the lower end of the Peace River from Peace Point, and south to the north shores of Lakes Claire and Mamawi, including Baril (Deep) Lake. Settlements were located along the rivers. Going downstream from Peace Point there were settlements at Point Providence, Carlson, Moose Island and the mouth of Baril (Deep) Creek, Rocky Point, and Rocher River and Little Rapids. Family names of residents included Grandejambe, Sakiskanip (Gibot), Pamatchakwew (Wandering Spirit), Petchimew (Voyageur), Kaskamin, and Takaro (field journals 1977 IV:88; V:3). There were also some named Martin. Evidently, many of these Crees came downriver from the Fort Vermilion-Little Red River area, though some, such as Sakiskanip and Pamatchakwew, may have considerable antiquity of residence in the area. Wabistikwan (Whitehead) is another family which was in the area in 1933 (PAC RG 85 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 1), but during this period it was also associated with the southern sector and with Big Bay, outside the park.

The southern Cree sector was overwhelmingly Martin in composition, with Wabistikwans and a Wakwan family. It included major settlements at Hay (Prairie) River, the location of a store, Gull River and Frog Creek (field journals 1977 IV:80; V:32; PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). Some of the population, especially from Gull River, shifted to the Embarras River settlement, with a population of about 45 and even larger, after 1926 (PAC RG 85 v. 1213 file 400-2-3 pt. 1). The Martins living there were joined by the Wabistikwans from Big Bay about 1943-44 (field journal 1977 IV:80). They may have moved there in hope of obtaining a reserve, as well as to trap muskrats, which were then recovering after the 1939 drought. The closing of a number of trading posts in the park between 1936 and 1940 was likely a factor in the relocation of families to Embarras, where they could remain in the bush, yet enjoy the convenience of a store. There were even several families from Jackfish Creek with Cree affinal ties which moved there.

Finally, there was Quatre Fourches or Dog Camp, a short distance west of Fort Chipewyan on the Quatre Fourches River. Many Crees lived here temporarily in the summer, and names such as Takaro and Sakiskanip appear as families with log houses. It was also a focus of Métis settlement, including Tourangeaus. There were about nine cabins located along the rivers. It was somewhat different from the other bush settlements because of its large summer population, its proximity to the town, and its Métis residents.

Alberta

To the east of the park borders, Alberta could be divided into sectors south of the lake and north of the lake. The southern sector was originally all Chipewyan, with settlements at Old Fort, Big Point, Jackfish (Richardson) Lake, and up the Athabasca River: Point Brûlé, Poplar Point, Lobstick Point. Chipewyan names associated with these localities were Laviolette, Marcel, Mercredi, Adam, Bruno, Thetsi (Trippe de Roche), and Ettlak'ale (Flett). There were "seven places for reserves" (field journals 1977 III:30; V:47,71), but over time the population concentrated at Old Fort and especially Jackfish Lake. These Chipewyans had contact with groups up the Athabasca River and with Caribou Eaters at the east end of Lake Athabasca. They abandoned Big Point after the Métis from Lac La Biche settled there in the 1920s, though possibly not until after the reserve had been created.

Métis settlement at Big Point has been discussed (chapter 4). The main families were Ladouceurs and Cardinals. They were in close contact with the Métis who had settled up the lake at Camsell Portage (Augers and Powders), as well as Métis down the Slave River, Bourque and Desjarlais, who had settled at Caribou Island and Poplar Island and hunted and trapped on the shield east of the Slave River.

There were two groups of Cree Indians in Alberta north of Lake Athabasca. Located east of the Slave River was a family named Pamatchakwew, which had either chosen hunting outside the park or which had lost access to hunting in the park for some reason. This group seems isolated from otehr Crees. Secondly, north of Lake Athabasca at Big Bay was a major Cree settlement at a place called Cree Lake by one person. People there were mostly Wabistikwans, including the old chief Pierre Whitehead. People would fish at Big Bay in the fall, and at freeze-up they would hunt up to the lakes behind, trapping as far as Saskatchewan. They must have been in the park in 1926, because they retained park privileges, but moved to Big Bay sometime after that date. They returned to the park by 1933, to the Baril Lake area, but were back at Big Bay about 1939, perhaps in response to the drought in the delta. In 1943 or 1944 they moved to the Embarras settlement (field journal 1977 IV:80). Their movements may reflect the following: differences in fur availability and prices, the protected status they enjoyed in the park, their kinship ties with park Crees, or their hope of obtaining a Cree reserve within the park borders.

The group areas in the park and the individual traplines in Alberta appear to have followed these aboriginal territorial divisions.

In the park, the Birch River and southern Cree areas were grouped together in one trapping area, reflecting movement of Cree trappers into the Birch River country as furs became depleted to the east and as Chipewyan residents moved north. Such land use was facilitated by affinal ties between Crees and Chipewyans. In Alberta, traplines for Chipewyans tended to cluster in the vicinity of their reserve, while Métis traplines were located in the northern and southern sectors. However, the assignment of individual traplines contradicted some of the traditional land use areas of the Indians and displaced some Indian trappers. Until this topic is researched further, it is unclear how great a problem it caused in the park and in Alberta.

THE INDIAN AGENT

Most of the government agents were sent into the north to administer regulations. Park wardens, fire rangers, game guardians, and RCMP imposed sanctions on people who violated wildlife administrative regulations and criminal statutes. They played the major role in separating Natives from the land, their traditional resource base, which was then available for exploitation by outsiders. This land alienation was one step in incorporating Native peoples into the national system of class capitalism. However, these agents did not intervene actively in Native lives in other directions as a matter of policy.

The first major agent of culture change was the Indian Agent. His job was to integrate the Indians under his charge into the national social formation by looking after their welfare and by implementing programs designed to foster assimilation. That is, once Indians had been alienated from the land, it was the Agent's task to assist them in making new lives for themselves along a Eurocanadian model.

To be effective in his job, an Indian Agent had to become an influential part of the social relations of production of the Indians. Especially in the north, where Indians were not restricted to reserves and continued their traditional livelihoods, his sources of influence and power lay in his joint roles of broker or middleman between the Indians and various outside government agencies and of patron to the Indians. The consequence of intervention by the Indian Agent was what R. W. Dunning termed "...an interdependent system of Indian status persons and government administration" (1962:225). This system developed at the direct expense of the traditional leaders and authority patterns:

> There was...a change in leadership from that of the indigenous person whose prestige was based on the aboriginal ecology and belief system to that of the external non-ethnic contact who represented and controlled the new life [Dunning 1959:118; cf. Dunning 1960:29].

The Indian Agent as Patron

Although Indians in the region had been supervised rather loosely by an Indian Agent since signing the treaty in 1899, no Agent resided in Fort Chipewyan until 1932. In that year Gerald Card retired, and the agency was moved to Fort Chipewyan. Ottawa appointed a physician, Dr. H. W. Lewis, as Agent to deal with Indian health problems as well as the administration of local Indian affairs. Dr. Lewis had moved to Fort Chipewyan in 1931 to be the Indian doctor (field journal 1978 VII:55; Marion Hunter 1936; PAA Crawley 1939:57; cf. Fumoleau 1975: 276). 1932 marks the beginning of significant intervention by the Indian Agent in the lives of Indians at Fort Chipewyan.

As the first resident Agent, Lewis had to create a niche for himself: he did not walk into an established role, so instead he defined the new role and the extent to which he would intervene in Indian lives. Although he had to support the ideologies, policies, and goals of his superiors, most of which were designed for prairie and parkland Indians, the reality of his situation was that he was isolated in a northern community, where he had considerable range for interpretation of departmental directives. It was up to him to transform policy and directives into a local plan of action (cf. Elias 1975:99-101). His initial role was that of a broker or middleman between Ottawa and the Fort Chipewyan bands. He was an intermediary who manipulated and processed messages rather than merely relaying them (a go-between) (Paine 1971b:6).

An Indian Agent needed more influence than a broker possessed. An influential Agent was one who had transformed his role of broker into the more encompassing and powerful role of patron. Paine (1971a; 1971b) and Henriksen (1971) have written about the process of becoming a patron in another milieu, which involves converting resources into influence (Paine 1971a:14; Henriksen 1971:22). A patron does not restrict the prestations he makes to his potential clients:

> Ideally, he offers items and services that are new to the culture and to which he alone has access, thereby actually _creating the need_ for his commodities [Paine 1971a:14; emphasis in the orig.; cf. also Henriksen 1971:23].

He varies the goods and services he offers, which creates a general dependence on him (Henriksen 1971:23). The lack of specificity by the aspiring patron about counterprestations makes it difficult for the people to know how to repay these gifts, and "...they cannot subsequently reject lightly any specific demand from him - for fear of losing his favours" (_ibid._).

> It is at this point that we can properly speak of a patron and his clients. In effect, the condition the patron makes for the continuance of his _largesse_ is that the prestations

> the clients make to him should also be generalized, and at his direction [Paine 1971a:15].

The relationship is asymmetrical, because the patron and client exchange different goods and services and because the major prestation which the patron expects to receive from the Indians is an acceptance of the values he is disseminating (Paine 1971a:15,19; Freeman 1971:34).

During the depression years of the 1930s, the Indian Agents at Fort Chipewyan had few tangible resources to use in building their influence with the Indians. They dispensed rations and bison meat to "indigent" Indians and to widows and the aged, especially those who chose to move to town. The Agent decided who would be eligible for this assistance (cf. PAA Head 4 Oct. 1939), which became increasingly needed during the 1930s and 1940s. The Agents intervened on behalf of the Indians with other agents, especially in the critical matter of hunting and trapping regulations. When they were physicians, the Agents provided medical services. In playing these diverse roles the Indian Agents were duplicating or taking over functions of traders and missionaries and of the bands themselves. It is to be expected that the influence and status of the traditional agents should have declined as a result, or possibly derived from the strengths of their relationships with the Indian Agent. As well, traditional Indian leadership and authority were undermined, as the deteriorating economic situation and new illnesses forced the Indians to rely on the services provided by the Agent.

Traditional Leaders Undermined

Traditional leadership was provided by individuals who were good hunters and who could provide for their groups. Dunning suggested that the changed ecology accompanying the transformation to a fur trade economy "...destroyed the foundations of the traditional leader's power" (1959:118). While not accepting this statement fully, the argument presented in chapter 3 contended that the authority of Indians trading with Europeans began to derive in part from the traders. However, although the traders became an element of the social relations of production of the local bands, in fact the traditional leadership was relatively unaffected in its expression within the communities, as long as there were ample supplies of fur and food for trade and subsistence and no deliberate attempts by traders to alter leadership patterns. The position of the Indian leaders was now threatened by the depletion of game and fur and by constraints on their exploitation experienced during these three decades in the Fort Chipewyan region. Their capacity to continue looking after the members of their bands would be based increasingly on the willingness of the Indian Agent to dispense rations and to mediate with game officials on their behalf. Continued effective Indian leadership at the local band level came to rest, therefore, on the relationship of the leader to the Agent.

The ability of leaders to look after their people may have been linked to their supernatural abilities, a factor which was common in the cultures of the boreal forest :

> Traditional leadership...was sanctioned and reinforced by an utter dependence upon the subsistence environment together with a belief in the conjurer's therapeutic control of illness [Dunning 1959:118].
>
> Conviction regarding their supernatural powers increased with their material and curing successes. Conversely, a high incidence of illness or death in their family groups was a sign of weakening power, and ultimately they ceased performing [drumming, conjuring, curing] [Dunning 1960:29].

These comments may apply to Fort Chipewyan.[8] It may be significant, therefore, that the members of the bands were threatened by devastating epidemics of influenza, tuberculosis, and other diseases which Indians were unable to combat effectively. This idea warrants elaboration, because the first three Indian Agents residing in Fort Chipewyan were physicians, and the medical services which they provided may have been an important source of their usurpation of power and influence *vis-à-vis* the Indians.

Disease

Chipewyan and Cree populations had been devastated since before earliest contact by smallpox and a host of other contagious diseases introduced by Europeans. Despite the existence of smallpox vaccination prior to this thirty year period, there was no vaccination program in northern Alberta. As recently as 1921, it was reported that "La petite vérole [smallpox] nous ravage. Les contaminés se trouvent en quarantaine à l'Ile-aux-Outardes [Bustard Island" (Duchaussois 1928:127). In that epidemic, there were approximately 37 cases of smallpox at Fort Chipewyan, three at Jackfish Lake, "some" at Hay River, and one at Fort Fitzgerald (letter from O. S. Finnie to W. W. Cory, Commissioner, NWT?, 18 July 1921, PAC RG 85 v. 585 file 578). A higher incidence may have been prevented by a certain level of presumed resistance or immunity in the population, which had been exposed to smallpox for nearly 150 years.

In late 1921 or spring, 1922, the people in the Fort Chipewyan region were afflicted by a new ailment, influenza, which was as disastrous then as smallpox must have been when it first appeared. It was described in a passage by one of the Sisters at the convent of *Saints-Anges* at Fort Chipewyan:

> "Depuis avril, l'influenza fauche partout. Presque tous, au couvent, furent atteints. En dehors, aux distances que les missionnaires ou les soeurs ne peuvent franchir à temps,

> ce fut terrible. Une cinquantaine de sauvages sont morts. Ils ne savent pas se soigner. Ils n'en ont pas non plus les moyen, les pauvres! Mgr Joussard porta du secours aux Montagnais et le Père Jaslier aux Cris. Ils trouvèrent presque tout le monde couché parmis les mourants. La faim s'ajoutait à la maladie: on jeûnait dans tous les camps. Les missionnaires revinrent chercher toutes les provisions disponibles pour les distribuer. Le chef montagnais et sa famille [Laviolette] etaient très loin quand il furent frappés de l'épidémie. Ils avancèrent péniblement pendant plusieurs jours; main bientôt les vivres firent défaut et les chiens tombèrent. On leur donna alors en pâture les pelleteries que l'on apportait: ce fut encore insuffisant; plusieurs périrent et les gens arrivèrent à nous à demi morts. L'une de nos anciennes élèves, Marguerite, avait succombé en route" [cited in Duchaussois 1928:119].[9]

Fumoleau has described the similar impact of the 1928 influenza epidemic in the NWT (1975:264-266,357-360). Marchand, in a study of epidemics in the Yukon, concluded that such epidemics and their high mortality rates

> ...can be attributed neither to insanitary living habits ...nor to some supposed lack of resistance to disease in general on the part of the Indian [1943:1020].

He found that patients who were treated recovered, while those without treatment had higher mortality rates. When everyone was sick at once in the Fort Chipewyan bush settlements, there was no one to nurse the ill or to procure food and gather firewood. It is not surprise that so many died as a consequence of this.

Dr. Rouget, the Indian Agent and medical doctor for the Treaty 11 region, wrote that after the 1928 epidemic influenza "'...left us all... weak without resistance, more disposed than ever to pneumonia and other lung diseases'" (cited in Fumoleau 1975:266). Bourget predicted that the influenza epidemics and the weakened condition of the people would result in their increased susceptibility to tuberculosis. While tuberculosis had been present in the region since at least the 19th century,[10] it did not dominate the roster of diseases until after the influenza epidemic, when Bourget's prediction came true (cf. field journal 1977 V:81). The situation may have been complicated by deteriorating diets of Indians outside the park from the 1920s and within the park toward the end of this period.[11] The high rate of mortality from tuberculosis was mentioned above as a major factor causing the abandonment of the Birch River settlements.

Other diseases continued to plague the region. There was a measles epidemic in 1935, and people suffered from diptheria, meningitis, whooping cough, and scarlet fever. Some families lost most of their children to these diseases, sometimes in only one winter. The high incidence of disease which people could not treat effectively with traditional medicines and curing practices led them to seek the services of the nursing Sister or the Indian Agent, their sole sources of non-traditional medical help. After World War II, when medical facilities were provided in Fort Chipewyan, they were an incentive for families, or at least mothers and children, to relocate to the town.

Until the 1930s, medical assistance was provided by members of the local communities and a nursing Sister at the mission. In Fort Chiepwyan and the bush settlements there were experienced midwives, who treated a wide range of illnesses, including tuberculosis, heart and eye problems, colds, and so forth, with varying degrees of success. Many people still use herbal remedies and "curers" for various illnesses, so there are medical traditions of long standing which were more important in earlier times. By 1925, a special nursing Sister was there, if not earlier:

> "Notre soeur garde-malade, écrit-on d'Athabaska, est réellement le docteur du pays. Toutes ses interventions ont réussi jusqu'ici. On vient la chercher pour des voyages de deux ou trois jours, en hiver comme en été. Rien qu'en 1925, elle a fait 418 visites, exécuté 22 opérations chirurgicales, petites ou grosses, appliqué

> 906 traitements, donnés 2.565 prescriptions, arraché ou plombé on ne sait combien de dents" [Duchaussois 1928:199].[12]

The Indian Agent-Physician

It was in the context of medical need that Lewis became the resident doctor for Indians in 1931 and Agent in 1932. He remained until 1936, when he was replaced by Dr. Head, who lasted until 1939-40. The final Agent-physician was Dr. Melling, from 1940 to 1942 (possibly till 1944?) (field journal 1978 VII:55; PAA Crawley 1939:57). There may have been a two year gap between the time Melling left until Jack Stewart arrived, the first non-physician Agent since Gerald Card (field journal 1977 V:25-26).

The presence of these men compensated somewhat for decreased federal funding for Indian health care. Ottawa's budget for Indian health care dropped between 1931 and 1934 from $1,050,000 to $793,000 (Fumoleau 1975:267). In 1937, the Director of Indian Affairs informed his agents, who were responsible for the administration of health services for Indians, that

> "The Depart. will expect a reduction in drug expenditures and demands of about 50 per cent...There will be no funds for tuberculosis surveys, treatment in sanatoria or hospital of chronic tuberculosis; or other chronic conditions... nor in fact, for any treatment except for acute sickness" [cited in Fumoleau 1975:267].

The federal grant to the hospital at Fort Smith remained at $1.00 per day per patient (status Indian) for the first 1,000 patient days, and a total of $0.65 per day thereafter, the level which had been set in 1912. Inadequate even then, it would not be raised until 1946, when it jumped to $2.50 pre day per patient (Breynat 1955:143). This grant, provided on behalf of status Indians only, had to cover costs incurred in treatment of non-status patients as well, few of whom had funds set aside for epidemics or other medical emergencies.

Fumoleau claims that this policy of appointing a medical doctor as Agent was in fact

> ...detrimental to the welfare of the Indians. Their economic and social problems were being neglected, while the white population received medical service at the expense of the Department of Indian Affairs [1975:276].

The majority of the entries in Head's 1939 journal concern his medical duties. In fairness to Head, he and presumably the other doctors did spend much of their time visiting the bush settlements. For example, in 1939, Head visited camps at Jackfish Lake and Poplar Point in January, in February he travelled into the park to Peace Point and Jackfish Creek, and then he was back at Jackfish Lake and Big Point at the end of February and in early March. Still, most of his time was spent in town. He was required to be there in order to attend to his administrative duties and so that persons requiring medical assistance could come to him. When the last Agent-physician, Dr. Melling, left Fort Chipewyan about 1942, the community was left with no professional medical services until the 1950s, although the nursing Sister and the Native midwives were probably as effective as the physicians had been in assisting at childbirth and other common problems.

Indian Agent Jack Stewart

Indian Affairs grew significantly in importance following the appointment of Jack (Jock) Stewart as Agent in 1944. Stewart was born in Scotland in 1903, and he had worked as a trader and post manager for Revillon Frères and later (1936-40) for Neil Walker at the Red River post on the Peace River. He was a warden in Wood Buffalo Park for three years (1941-44) (application form for Game Guardian position from John Warnock Stewart, PAC RG 85 v. 929 file 12010). He married a Métis woman and spoke Cree fluently (field journals 1977; 1978). With this background, he was ideal for the job, because he knew the people and the land as no other Agent before him had. He would remain at Fort Chipewyan for more than 20 years, interpreting and managing the programs which were designed to help Indians to become incorporated into the wage economy during the 1950s and 1960s. He was, in fact, the last Indian Agent at Fort Chipewyan, ending his service in the late 1960s, when the Cree and Chipewyan bands took over the administration of their own affairs.

Stewart built on his personal social assets and experience and on the groundwork laid by the Indian Agents who preceded him. He became a powerful patron who is today remembered favorably by virtually everyone (field journals 1977; 1978). This is in spite of the fact that his job required him to encourage and even force changes in Indian lifeways. When the mid 1940s brought about new government initiatives toward the northern Indians, he was in a position as Agent to call in his "debts" and use his considerable influence to encourage culture change in specific directions. In particular, he urged men to work at wage labor and families to place their children in residential school, with the result that Indians lost control of the rearing of their children.

Stewart played four major roles as Indian Agent. Appendix 1 details specific actions, excerpted from his daily journal for his first year as Agent. Firstly, he provided social assistance of various sorts. Since there was no physician in the community, Stewart was responsible for deciding whether or not people should be sent out for medical treatment, and he referred individuals to the nursing Sister. He provided "relief" in the form of rations and bison meat. He may have channelled relief to people in the bush through the chiefs and headmen, who brought him information about cases of hardship and destitution in the bush settlements. The chiefs preferred having Stewart work through them rather than having him dispense rations directly to the needy (PAA Stewart 9 Sept. 1947), which might have been logistically impossible in any event. He provided food, shelter, and wood for widows, the aged, and the sick who were living in Fort Chipewyan. He administered the Family Allowance program, and he was a source of jobs and information about jobs. He continually informed Indians about game regulations, their personal treaty rights, and proper behavior in a variety of areas. Providing this kind of assistance and "talking to the people" were traditional chiefly roles, and Stewart was fulfilling them, no matter how much he tried to work through and support the leaders of the local bands.

His second major role was that of mediator and information broker between the Indians and other agents. In particular, he discussed the game situation with the park administration and wardens and with Alberta game guardians, and he conveyed information about game regulations, restrictions, and traplines to the Indians. He assisted in drawing up traplines and group areas and in convincing the Indians to accept them. Also, he attended the trials of Indians charged with various offenses, especially those related to hunting and trapping. He advised them of their rights and often spoke on their behalf, and he may have devised trial strategies, as in one instance when an Indian laid a countercharge against a White trapper (PAA Stewart 4 Jan. 1945). Where offenders were in the wrong, he advised them to obey the law in the future (cf. PAA Stewart 16 March 1945). The Indians trusted his advice, expertise, and connections with other administrative agents.

In a third area, Stewart developed the infrastructure and facilities he needed to run his various programs. His first step was to buy a cabin boat to use in treaty trips and other trips to bush settlements (PAA Stewart 26-29 Aug. 1944). Later, he had an office and warehouse built. The warehouse stored the increasingly large amounts of rations which he dispensed to the Indians.

Finally, he encouraged people to send their children to school. Education was the key to the government's post-war northern policy, and it was the major instrument of culture change for the Indians. Therefore, both Stewart's role in education and the education developments at Fort Chipewyan during this period are considered below in some detail.

Education

The Roman Catholic and Anglican missionaries had established schools at Fort Chipewyan in the 19th century, designed to assist proselytization efforts rather than to cause culture change in other areas. The schools, especially the boarding school run by the Grey Nuns and Oblates, became important during these three decades, due in part to the fact that orphans found a home at the convent. By 1929-30, the Roman Catholic school had 98 pupils, 18 of whom were day pupils, the children of traders and other residents of Fort Chipewyan. The remaining 80 were boarders. 41 of these were treaty, and 39, non-treaty. 29 of the non-treaty children were orphans, and the other 10 were children whose parents were in a "precarious" situation, "...the trapping being very poor all over the country during the past few years" (letter from J. L. Coudert to Hon. J. E. Brownlee, Premier of Alberta, 25 Feb. 1930; cf. other correspondence; PAA Premier Papers).

The mission received a federal grant of $0.50 per day for each treaty child in residence, which amounted to approximately $150 per year, based on a 300 day school year. This amount was about double the subsidy provided in 1907, which was $72 (report from Inspector Hancock commanding 'A' division to the Commissioner, Alberta Provincial Police, Edm., 6 Sept. 1929, PAA Premier Papers). Although no subsidy was received for non-treaty children, the mission kept them as an act of charity:

> Most of these [half-breed children] have lost either one or both parents, and the parents who are still living are leading an Indian life, that is to say, just existing from hand to mouth, and are not contributing to the children [ibid.].

In 1929, however, the mission informed the provincial government that the boarding school was "...in a financial distress through lack of support" (letter from J. L. Coudert to J. E. Brownlee, 20 Aug. 1929, PAA Premier Papers). Although the province investigated, nothing was done, perhaps because of its earlier position that "...whatever any religious organization undertakes as part of its religious effort of a community or social nature, it must do on its own responsibility..." (letter from the J. E. Brownlee (?) to H. Milton Morton, 21 May 1929, PAA Premier Papers). Father Coudert again wrote to the Premier in February, 1930, stressing that the non-treaty boarders were French, not Indian. He warned the Premier that without some financial assistance from the province, "...we would feel unable to continue our work of education in behalf of the white population in that part of the Province" (letter from J. L. Coudert to J. E. Brownlee, 25 Feb. 1930, PAA Premier Papers). The province may have decided to subsidize the school in the early 1930s. In June, 1930, an Anglican day school was started with 19 pupils,

"...several being R.C. children who, not having made progress in their school, came to me [Rev. Crawley] hoping to learn" (PAA Crawley 1939: 38). The existence of this second school may have encouraged the provincial government to assist the Fort Chipewyan schools.

The education experience for the children was not especially good. As in most other schools for Native students, the children were not allowed to speak their Native languages. At the Fort Chipewyan Holy Angels School, they spoke French and some English. The older children helped the younger ones to "learn the ropes," but the residence was often a frightening and bewildering experience for the new children, with strict and sometimes harsh discipline and strange rules which they had to learn and follow. One woman commented that the imposition of strict discipline actually backfired, in that it made the children lazy and disobedient during their ten months of schooling (McCormack 1978; field journal 1978 VIII:24; Godsell 1959:110; cf. Manuel and Posluns 1974:67). The children learned some academic basics and received religious instruction. They also did the residence chores, which included sawing wood, hauling water, mending, and working in the kitchen and in the gardens (field journals 1977; 1978; Godsell 1959:109; Rourke n.d.: 190).

The pace of growth of schooling quickened in 1940 for both Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Mildred Rathbone of the Anglican Women's Auxiliary informed Bishop Sovereign that the community now had about 40 Anglican children who "desire" schooling, and she requested that a clergyman and teacher be sent (letter from Mildred Rathbone, Fort Chipewyan, to Bishop Sovereign, 4 July 1940, PAA 70.387 A.320/169). The Bishop obliged by assigning the Reverend Norman Burgomaster to

Fort Chipewyan (letter from Bishop Sovereign to Mrs. R. C. Rathbone, 9 July 1940, PAA 70.387 A.320/169), and so the Auxiliary decided to build a new mission school (letter from Mrs. Rathbone to Bishop Sovereign, 20 July 1940, PAA 70.387 A.320/169).

In 1942, the Roman Catholic mission began to build a new residential school, which was completed in 1945 (field journals 1977 III: 89: 1978 VIII:47; letter from E. Picard to Mgr. Trocellier, 20 Dec. 1945, Archives of the Bishop). The school was approved for 80 Indian children (letter from E. Picard to Mgr. Trocellier, 18 Oct. 1945, Archives of the Bishop), although numbers in the residence and school would rise well over this figure. The residence now kept orphans over the summer, for which it was not paid. If parents were formerly required to sign contracts in which they agreed to leave their children in the residence for a specified number of years, as one person claimed (field journal 1977), this practice ceased by 1945, if not before.

By 1943, the Alberta government was providing a grant of $400 annually to the Anglican and the Roman Catholic day schools on behalf of their non-treaty students (letter from G. Fred McNally ?, Dep. Min., Dept. of Ed., to Bishop Sovereign, 15 April 1943, PAA 70.387 A.320/169; letter from E. Picard to Rve. Père Fortier, 13 Sept. 1944, Archives of the OMI).

There are several reasons for this increased interest in education. First, the population of school age children was growing in number. Also, parents may have seen the competitive advantages of some formal education for their children. Parents living in bush settlements and some of those in town were taking advantage of the residence as a way of relieving them of supporting children who were not economically productive in the busy household. It may be significant in this regard that children usually left school around the ages of 12, 13 or 14, to help out at home (field journals 1977 IV:80; 1978 VIII:39; Leising 1959:34). As one woman explained, "parents are not heavy on education and take their children out of school early to work at home or learn trapping" (letter from Mrs. Fred Fraser to Dept. of Ed., 14 Sept. 1944?, Archives of the OMI).

The important consequence of the enlarged educational facilities was that more children came under the influence of the missionaries for longer periods. Although the provision of religious instruction and formal education were important functions of this schooling, of special importance were "...the training and formation of their [Indian] character..." (Leising 1959:34), a process of informal education or socialization with far-reaching effects. This training, out of the hands of the parents who placed their children in the schools and especially the residence, was a crucial element in preparing Native children to accept the post-war transformation of the northern economy and shift of mode of production. Jean Godsell had commented on this process in the 1920s, when she observed that children were being taught a new way of life,

> ...an undertaking which resulted in their developing a healthy contempt for everything they had been born to - including their parents!
>
> Not only that - this "new way of life" bred superiority complexes amongst the Indians which caused the male element to aspire to be "big shots," interpreters at the trading posts or barracks where they could sport nautical caps, fancy moccasins and navy blue suits every day of their lives instead of the buckskin of the forests - and the girls to snatch up a white husband, no matter how degraded a type he might be, or indulge in all the jobs of connubial bliss without benefit of clergy [1959:109-110; see below for Godsell's interpretation of Native peoples].

To the extent to which the Native children learned to accept the authority of the priest, they would also be subject to the Indian Agent, especially as he gradually assumed many of the roles formerly played by the priests and chiefs.

Anglican schooling became controlled provincially in 1945 when a public school district was created in Fort Chipewyan. There was considerable controversy about this new district. The Anglican school did not have the success hoped, due to dissatisfaction with Reverend Burgomaster's mismanagement of the school and his poor care of the mission premises, according to one letter. The children who stayed away did not attend the Roman Catholic day school either, since it refused to take Protestant students so as not to interfere with the Anglican operation (letter from Mrs. Fred Fraser to Dept. of Ed., 14 Sept. 1944?, Archives of the OMI; cf. Fisher 1981:41). It was Burgomaster who first proposed establishing a school district: "By getting [a] school district created he could enforce the School Act, and benefit himself" (letter from Ft. Chipewyan business residents to W. H. Swift, Chief Inspector of Schools, Dept. of Ed., 10 Jan. 1945, Archives of the OMI). Neither the Fort Chipewyan residents nor the Alberta Department of Education viewed the proposal favorably, because it was thought that the community could not afford the level of taxation which would be required to support a school and teacher. "To pay a teacher the minimum salary and operate the school would require approximately $700.00 more than the grant" of $400, which it was already receiving. Moreover, a school district would not be eligible for a maintenance grant (letter from G. Fred McNally?, Dep. Min., Dept. of Ed., to Bishop A. H. Sovereign, 15 April 1943, PAA 70.387 A.320/169). In spite of this difficulty and the reality that the number of students at the Catholic day school vastly outnumbered those at the Anglican day school, a school district was created which was "public," which at Fort Chipewyan meant Protestant rather than Roman Catholic (which would have been the more logical choice for a school district in this predominantly Roman Catholic community).

The Roman Catholic school continued to educate all Roman Catholic children from the community, but it lost its provincial subsidy, and it did not receive any income from school taxes, all of which went to support the public school (letter from Père Gilles Mousseau to M. L'Abbé Barbeau, 20 Sept. 1952, Archives of the OMI). Immediately, the Roman Catholic mission began to consider how it might have a "separate" school district and took steps in that direction. This met with opposition from the provincial Department of Education, according to one letter (ibid.), which suggested that the public school district wanted to have all the Roman Catholic children in its school as well, in order to enlarge the public school. The creation of a separate school district would have redirected the taxes of Roman Catholic taxpayers in the community and would have caused a significant loss to the public school district. In other words, because funds for schooling were limited, the creation of a public school district split the Fort Chipewyan residents into Anglican and Roman Catholic factions who were in conflict over the disposition of local tax dollars and the right to control the education of their children (cf. letter from Victor Mercredi to W. Swift, Dep. Min., Dept. of Ed., 4 Oct. 1952, Archives of the OMI).

These education/religious factions were rooted in pre-existing divisions in the Fort Chipewyan community. Roman Catholic residents usually were French half-breeds or Métis, and they had many ties of kinship and friendship to the Indians in the bush settlements. They and their parents had been the labor force of the fur trade and the town.

It was this group which was being forced to turn more and more to trapping to survive during this period. The Anglicans, on the other hand, were the descendants of Scots and Scots Métis who had been owners and managers of trading operations. They had better jobs, owned more property, and formed the local upper class. The first language was English. They identified not with the Indians and their bush culture, with whom they had few kinship links, but with the dominant society outside (cf. Rawson n.d.:5-6; Godsell 1959:67). The willingness of the Anglicans to come under the jurisdiction of the provincial Department of Education suggests that the goals of that department were acceptable to them. The creation of a public school district contributed to this internal division of Fort Chipewyan residents and to the development of political factions at a time when increasingly serious problems in the local economy required joint action. As Rawson commented, "It's practically impossible to get anything done for the group as a whole" (n.d.:60).

Jack Stewart became Indian Agent at Fort Chipewyan at the start of this controversy, and he would play a role in it during the mid 1950s. It was his responsibility to administer the family allowance payments, which were to provide an incentive for parents to keep their children in day schools. However, the rules for family allowance payments, school attendance, and Native peoples living traditional lives in bush settlements were unclear.

Family Allowance and School Attendance

The initial response to family allowances was that Indians living in the bush kept their children home (letter from E. Picard to Mgr. Trocellier, 18 Oct. 1945, Archives of the Bishop). If their children were kept in the residence and "maintained" by the federal government through its per capita grants, the parents lost the family allowances paid to schools on their behalf. However, this rule was not applied to non-status Indians and Métis, who continued to receive the allowance when their children were in the residence. This was because the residence did not receive federal grants for their support at any time. In theory, parents were supposed to turn over the family allowance to the residence, which, in practice, they rarely did. They paid what they could (field journal 1978 VII:12; Sister Brady 1977). The family allowances should not have affected the number of non-status children in the residence.

It was important for the residence to continue to have a full complement of students, because otherwise the size of its grant would decline. Stewart was instrumental in getting former students back in the residence for the fall school year in 1945, but he did little, according to Father Picard, to bring in new admissions. Picard applied considerable pressure on parents, reminding them of their obligation to ensure that their children received religious instruction. The school took children who were only five and six years old, in order to obtain even the small number of students which it had that year (103 students in the school, and 62 in the residence)(letter from E. Picard to Mgr. Joseph Trocellier, 18 Oct. 1945, Archives of the Bishop).

One of Stewart's most time-consuming tasks was checking school attenance lists and issuing family allowances (cf. PAA Stewart 9 Sept. 1947; other entries). On September 9, 1947, he wrote, "Have had to get after some of the people about not admitting some of their children at the start of the term." He met with some success, because on September 22 he wrote, "School is gradually filling up with new pupils. We are trying in every way to persuade the people to put their children in school" (ibid. 22 Sept. 1947). However, he seemed confused about the rules for cutting off the allowances based on nonattendance:

> Family Allowance officials seem to be very strict with school attendance. This policy is not quite clear in an area where school facilities for both white and Indian are not nearly sufficient, This will mean that some families will have allowance cancelled where others will not and the circumstances are the same. Our Policy with the Indian here had been to take Some Children from each family but at least to get one from each family [ibid. 9 Oct. 1947].

Despite Picard's concerns about the family allowance, by 1947, Stewart found that although people may have wanted the money, they did not make every effort to obtain it. Many young children had not received allowance since birth. He requested retroactive payment for them, only to be told that it was provided only on the basis of isolation, not because of "...carelessness on the Indians [sic] part" (Stewart 31 Dec. 1947). While some families were removed from allowances for non-school attendance of their children, other families were cut off because their children lived in the residence. By 1947 he reported that the "...schools are up to capacity..." (ibid.), which meant that Indians and Métis were putting their children in the residence, because they had not yet begun moving to town at that time.

What can be made of these contradictory statements? On the one hand, in 1945 Picard reported difficulty in obtaining enough students to fill the residence, and he blamed the situation on the family allowances. Two years later, the schools were full, which almost certainly meant the residence was too. Yet placing the children in the residence meant that the treaty families lost their allowances, and Stewart said that many families were rather casual in applying for this income supplement. It would help to interpret this situation if there were good figures on the numbers of status and non-status children in the residence.

The mid and late 1940s were a time of great economic difficulty, which was an incentive for people to put their children in the residence to avoid having to support them in the bush. Five dollars per month family allowance would not have provided much food for each child. Also, Stewart put his personal influence behind his efforts to get parents to put their children in school. This combination of factors may have been enough to counteract the loss of an income supplement, which they were going to lose anyway if they kept their children in the bush. Although they could have moved to town and put the children in day schools, the employment situation was still too poor to support this drastic change in lifeway which would characterize the 1950s.

Summary

To conclude this lengthy discussion, the Indian Agent grew in influence and prestige during the 1930s and 1940s to become the powerful patron of status Indians at Fort Chipewyan. Although Stewart asnd the other Indian Agents were supposed to assist the Indians in many areas, their primary goal as Agents was to promote culture change and assimilation, when such assimilation was compatible with the northern economic situation. Assimilation was viewed by the federal government as the solution to the Indians' economic problems. Elias points out that agents such as government bureaucrats play

> "...roles of political dominance. Their definition includes certain latent interests which aim at the maintenance of existing institutions and valid values." ...
>
> As a tool of the powerful and as participants in the administration of authority, the bureaucrat becomes a supporter of the attitudes, ideals and objectives prevailing amongst the powerful [1975:99].

The various activities undertaken by the Indian Agents undermined the traditional leadership and authority patterns of the local bands and fostered Indian dependence. In a sense, the Agent became a "super chief." He interacted with Indians through their traditional leaders and their official treaty chiefs on an individual basis. Henriksen's Naskapi study indicates the value to the patron of an individualistic approach:

> ...he approaches them, and they him, without an intermediary [Stewart, as a fluent Cree speaker, did not need a translator]. In fact, it is important for the maintenance of his overall position of influence that the missionary personally distributes the resources of his patronage. It is only in a situation in which a patron deals directly with his clients that he can be certain that his resources and patronage are enjoyed only by persons willing and able to adopt his values [1971:31].

Elsewhere, Derek Smith discusses the process from the perspective of the client:

> ...if we view individual political relationships as means of establishing access to scarce material and power resources, it is clear that Native persons would be less likely to turn to other Native people but to those who hold control over those resources and show willingness, albeit under well-defined conditions, to make them available to Native people [1975:45].

The development of these patron-client ties led to the weakening and even severing of "horizontal" Indian relationships with one another in favor of "vertical" relationships with the Indian Agent.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND ETHNIC PROCESSES

Similar vertical relationships characterized interaction between Natives and other administrative agents. These other agents included missionaries, traders, game guardians and wardens, and RCMP. The traders and missionaries probably are the most important. Each had Native clients, and some may have had non-Native clients from among the White trappers of the region. By 1948, all patrons were non-Native or White, with their power derived from external agencies, and most clients were Native.

These relationships reflected, defined, and integrated Fort Chipewyan society in the post World War I decades. It had become divided into dominant White and subordinate Native sectors; each sector divided internally into groups based on class and ethnicity. The local social organization of the fur trade period was being replaced by the national class structure of Canada. Peter Usher calls this process "homogenization," or "...the disappearance of particularities of place and culture" (1976:30). The new plural society would have not parallel social sectors, but "...vertical stratification of culturally differentiated groups..." (Derek Smith 1975:xiii).

Smith has discussed this type of pluralism for the Mackenzie Delta communities in the post World War II period. He points to the lack of value consensus among the constituents of the social formation:

> ...conflict or confrontation [and interaction] within the plural society is between distinctly separate culturally differentiated sections each pursuing its own institutional arrangements and, at least in the extreme limiting case, have no value consensus between them or common participation in core institutions of the society as a whole. ... Integration derives, not from consensus of values between the cultural sections, but rather from regulation of inter-sectional relations through the exercise of power and control in the polity by...one of the sections over the other. ... regulation in such a case
>
> "...consists in the rigid and hierarchical ordering of the relations between the different sections. Since the various sections are culturally differentiated, and consensus therefore a remote possibility, and since the subordinate sections are unlikely to accord equal value and legitimacy to the preservation of the hierarchic pattern, authority and power and regulation have crucial significance in maintaining, controlling and co-ordinating the plural society" [Derek Smith 1975:

16; emphasis in the original].

The patron-client relationships and the power exercised by the various agents integrate the different social units or "levels" within the plural social formation. This section outlines the constituents and discusses inter-ethnic relations as well as processes of ethnic and cultural divergence and convergence in the Fort Chipewyan region.

The White Sector

Although Fort Chipewyan had been dominated by European fur traders for most or all of the 19th century, there were only a few Whites present in the community in the 1920s. These included the Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries, traders, and the RCMP (Rourke n.d.:90). The chief factor of the HBC was John James Loutit, a Scots Métis; his only White employee was the accountant (Rourke n.d.:90; Godsell 1959: 34). The Oblates and Grey Nuns kept to their mission and their duties, taking little part in the social life of the community (Rourke n.d.:90). Their isolation was reflected in the separation of the mission from the rest of the town. Louise Rourke (n.d.) and Jean Godsell (1959), wives of HBC employees stationed at Fort Chipewyan and Fort Smith in the 1920s, provided detailed information about these Whites and their interactions with each other and with the Natives.

Both show the social gulf which existed between Whites and Natives in the region, and the racism and paternalism which characterized White attitudes and notions toward Natives. This gulf derived from attitudes and relations established in the 19th century fur trade (cf. Van Kirk 1980; Brown 1980). Rourke, going down the Athabasca River on her trip to Fort Chipewyan, observed that the Indians and Métis deckhands "evidently expected 'white ladies' to behave according to early

Victorian pattern..." (n.d.:63). Her Métis servant, Dora, informed her about these expectations: Dora

> ...had strict ideas about the things which a white woman should and should not do if she is to keep (or establish) her "caste," and it surprised me very much to find such ideas prevailing in this remote part of Canada....
>
> I remember she once told me that she had been given an explanation of the words "lady" and "gentleman," by one of the Indian agents. This official is, of course, not a native, but usually an educated white man who acts as a sort of guardian over the Indians of a certain given territory. This Indian Agent had been passing through the Settlement during Dora's time of training at the Mission, and he had "inspected" the children and given them an address.
>
> A "lady" or a "gentleman" she described to me, quoting from her memories of the past, were "persons wearing very nice clothes, and having no need to work" [Rourke n.d.:217-8].

Godsell also commented on her special status, noting that "...white women were placed on pedestals since they were few in number and far between" (1959:2). One not surprising result was that White women in the settlements were isolated socially, like the few White women who had ventured into the fur trade territories in the 19th century (cf. Van Kirk 1980:chp. 8). They had few companions of their "...own kind" (Rourke n.d.:91). As Godsell explained about Indian Agent Gerald Card's wife, "Having first gone north to Fort Simpson in 1906 with her husband, ...Mrs. Card understood all the lonely heartaches a white woman experienced in that land" (1959:48).

White men were somewhat less confined by this social barrier of race and class, because they were employees whose jobs required them to interact with Natives in various capacities. Single men occasionally sought out Natives for companionship, sexual and otherwise, and they sometimes married "upper class" Métis women.[13] In some instances these marriages cost them their jobs. Married men had their social relationships mediated largely by their wives. Women gave the dinner parties and did the entertaining in the 1920s, just as they did in the 1970s (Godsell 1959:173; cf. Rawson n.d.:5-6; Brody 1975:65; field journals 1975; 1977; 1978). This gulf defined by race and class thus separated White men and women from Native men and women.

Attitudes toward Natives

The attitudes of the Whites toward the Natives ranged from contempt to paternalistic concern and tolerance. There was the notion of "tutelage," in that all Whites viewed themselves as "...socializers of Native people" (Derek Smith 1975:36; cf. inter alia Paine 1977:xi,78-80). Rourke reflected on "...our responsibility towards the Indian..." (n.d.: 92). She believed that

> ...before our social concept [morals] can be as instinctive with them as it is with us, two or three generations of these people will have to be trained to accept the white man's regulations of humanity's fundamental herd instinct as the only right and proper system that has yet been evolved for the convenience of a gregarious humanity [n.d.:103].

Until this moral transformation occurred, however, she realized that Natives would suffer. She explained this situation with a statement of Social Darwinism:

> If a regret is expressed that a proud and fine race should disappear, it is realized that no particular organizations or individuals are censurable. To see themselves swept down before a stronger force is simply a sad part of the price some are forced to pay in the normal course of evolution [n.d.:96].

In another context, Brody points out that it was this sort of attitude and the idealization of the few White agents in the north in the pre-war period that obscured

> ...the negative attitude that many of these men had towards the Eskimos and their land. Because they went north with commercial or ideological motives, they were intent on radical changes in Eskimo life [1975:16].

Moreover, this focus on heroic individuals obscured the fact that they represented institutions:

> The traders, police and missionaries constituted a joined - if not joint - endeavour: the incorporation of the Eskimos into the mainstream of southern life. Although the fieldwork was carried out by rugged individuals,...their purposes and methods neatly dovetailed [Brody 1975:17].

In other words, the colonial process was wreaking havoc among the Natives at Fort Chipewyan, not some sort of "natural law" at work. Tutelage and racism were primary yet complementary aspects of the colonial process.

Despite Rourke's comment that "Canada has no racial problem with the native people of the soil" (n.d.:96), comments which are clearly racist are scattered throughout Godsell's book. While Rourke mentioned Native "reserve" in their style of interaction (n.d.:101), Godsell saw Natives as "stolid," whether "sitting stolidly" (1959:1; also p. 155) or "gazing stolidly" (ibid.:32). She referred to a "...dusky daughter of Fort Chipewyan...[who] was always silent and impassive" (ibid.:22). Regarding another woman who gossiped, she said, "'She just can't help herself, imbued as she is with all the weaknesses of the native and their partiality for that sort of thing'" (ibid.:162).

Godsell commented at length on the hostility of Natives toward Whites. In one case, "I glimpsed a veiled hostility in her dark, brooding eyes" (1959:55). Her remarks on her reception by HBC chief factor John James Loutit, whom she had just met on her first trip north, is revealing for how she appears to have read her own sentiments into such encounters:

> The factor acknowledged the introduction [of her by her husband] with what outwardly appeared to be shyness, but my womanly intuition immediately recognized an underlying, undying hostility in his dark and smouldering eyes. He was, to say the least, anything but friendly and I immediately disliked him [ibid.:34-35].

She used class analysis to account for his perceived animosity:

> For untold ages he, and others of his ilk, had been the uncrowned Lords of the North, exercising an almost despotic sway. But, with the gradual intrusion of civilization, these men were being slowly but surely shorn of their ruthless power and glory, which they resented with a deep undercurrent of bitter and malignant hatred. Of native extraction, their methods of resisting these changes were as devious as they were Machiavellian, as I was presently to learn.
>
> I represented it, without realizing it, the very thing these native-born members of the old regime viewed with such suspicion and distrust. ...[M]ost of the Company's factors were still intermarried with the tribes, and women of mixed blood dominated the social and, to a large extent, the business life of all these forts and settlements. Instinct seemed to tell them, and truly, that, once their place was usurped by women of the acquisitive and dominating paleface race, they would be relegated to a position of more or less obscurity, completely shorn of all their power and glory...[*ibid*.:35].

A French Métis told her, "'You damn palefaces t'ink you own whole worl'" (*ibid*.:78).

Both Rourke and Godsell had Native servants. While Rourke appears to have put herself in the hands of her servants, who, she said, felt they were doing her a favor by working for her (n.d.:76-77), hardly the "proper" attitude for servants to take, Godsell was given a lesson in "handling Indians" and mastering her servants (1959:44-45).

Native Responses to Racism

Natives responded to such outlooks ambivalently. Attitudes such as Godsell's could be expected to provoke hostility. Rourke mentioned that people at Fort Chipewyan used the Cree term *moonias*, meaning "White person," as "...an Indian term of contempt..." for each other (n.d.: 63; cf. Godsell 1959:170). On the other hand, both women felt some Indian women tried to remedy their inferior social status *vis-à-vis* White women by dress and make-up. They ordered out of the Eaton's catalogue and copied the dress worn by White women in the community (Rourke n.d.:85-6;

Godsell 1959:200-1). Some women bobbed their hair "...in imitation of the whites, only to be referred to as 'buffalo heads' by the less advanced of their kind who refused to be high-hatted..." (Godsell 1959: 201). They used make-up, including white face powder and even skin bleach to "whiten" their physical appearance (ibid.:201-2). One woman was upset at the lack of results: "'I'm use all dem jars an' my skin... 'stead o' being white like yours,' she jumped in fury, 'is still lak damn black Injun's!'" (ibid.:202).

To summarize, while there were few Whites resident in the north, they set themselves apart from the Natives, with ethnic and racial factors separating them. This situation did not change over the next 20 years. Hildred Rawson wrote about 1943 that "...the color bar is complete and final. One never entertains a mixed-blood person" (n.d.: 5-6).

Conflict within the White Sector

The members of this tiny White social sector did not cooperate automatically, however, and interaction among them was often strained. There were two factors causing this situation. The first was ideas about class and appropriate inter-class interaction which Whites brought to the north as part of their personal "baggage," and which Rourke was so surprised to discover at Fort Chipewyan. Brody points out that "...the relevance of class factors will increase directly in relation to the number of personnel in any settlement" (1975:74), and Godsell confirmed that class lines were clear at Fort Smith, with its larger White population, than at Fort Chipewyan (1959:160). She described the RCMP Inspector and his wife at Fort Fitzgerald as "...the type of English who merely tolerated 'people in trade'..." (1959:49). Class factors were affected by other criteria: (1) formal status as a government agent, (2) marital status, and (3) length of residence in the north (Derek Smith 1975:20-21).

The second factor producing conflict within the White sector was the patron-client relationships which existed between White agents and Native clients. Agents differed in their interpretation of the local situation, of their proper roles, and of Native "problems" and their resolution. Where differences were great, especially when they affected the various agents' relative status in the community and their chances for promotion, the agents conflicted with one another and used their clients as resources in this conflict. Discord among agents of various bureaucratic line organizations might be reflected in strained relations among members of the Native communities (cf. Elias 1975:103-110; Brody 1975:18,74; Derek Smith 1975:44-46; Baker 1976). The wider literature on the region provides many examples of conflicts between the Indian Agent, game officials, and RCMP over Indian trapping and subsistence practices, and conflicts between park wardens and RCMP and between local traders. Godsell's husband had informed her about "'the winter fur war, with all its bitter hatreds...'" (1959:66), but she was astonished to find out that women took sides as well in matters she had thought would be extra-domestic and only in the male sphere of activity. Hurt and angered at what she viewed as personal rejection by the other women, she ended up supporting her HBC husband (1959:66-67). She summarized her perception of this situation of class and conflict:

> In these little northern fur forts one was completely cut off from the outside world after the last sternwheeler and scow left in the fall, and the few exiles, drawn from different strata of society - with widely separated ideas and viewpoints - were thrown into close and intimate contact, and what affected one phase of our existence affected

> the other in no uncertain manner. Under ordinary circumstances they would never have met, let alone mingled. Here, however, they were forced to rub shoulders week after week, month after month, with results which might have been expected [1959:67].

Fragmentation of the Indian population along the lines of those of the White community was prevented at this time by the fact that Indians were still living in the bush and maintaining band and personal autonomy as a result. Also, the number of these agents in Fort Chipewyan was few until the post-war period, with the Indian Agent clearly dominant _vis-à-vis_ the Indians. The patron-client relationship which existed in the region might be said to be a "pre-adaptation" to factionalism.

The Métis population resident in Fort Chipewyan (as opposed to those in bush settlements) was more vulnerable to White conflicts, especially since many of them relied for their livelihood on the jobs obtained through or from the agents. When the number of White agents increased in the 1950s, when people began to move from the bush settlements into town, where they were more dependent on assistance, patron-client relationships would become more important and would hinder the development of Native leadership and Native efforts to cooperate in resolving their difficulties.

The Native Sector

The Native sector of the Fort Chipewyan social formation was differentiated on the basis of ethnicity. Ethnic affiliation was based on the interaction of three factors: geographical origin, emphasis in mode of production, and residence (see table 8). Origins were shown in family surnames, which served to identify ethnic affiliations too. There were Scots, French, and Lac La Biche Métis, and Chipewyan and Cree Indians. Emphasis in mode of production split the Natives into

Table 8

Native Sector: Internal Differentiation

	Town	Bush	
		Alberta	Park
Métis	Scots	Lac La Biche	
	French		
Indians		Chipewyans	Chipewyans
		Crees	Crees

two groups: those people who emphasized the trapping aspects of the fur trade mode of production and who typically lived in the bush, as opposed to those who emphasized the wage labor aspects, providing the fur trade and mission labor force, and who typically lived in town.

Natives living in the town were mostly Scots and French Métis, subdivided roughly into entrepreneurial/managerial and laborer groups, respectively. Godsell pointed out that

> ...the Mackenzie-Athabasca region was dominated by a sort of feudal aristocracy of half-breed families whose ancestors had, for generations, been a power in the land... [1959:67; cf. MacGregor 1974:169],

while Rourke noted that "the tripper is usually drawn from the better educated of the half-breeds, as, indeed, are many of the modern 'Factors' in the North" (n.d.:241).

Few Indians lived in the town during this period. There were some widows, sick, and hunters who had their park licences revoked, with their families. All needed assistance from the Indian Agent, which was why they were there. Rourke claimed that a few Indians lived in town because they were failures in the bush (n.d.:102-3). The discussion will return to these precedents in chapter 8.

The people who lived in the bush were mostly Lac La Biche Métis and the Chipewyan and Cree Indians. They were subdivided into two groups according to their place of residence in Alberta (Lac La Biche Métis, delta Chipewyan, some Crees) or in the park (park Chipewyan, most of the Crees).

Ethnicity was a source of personal identity, and it channelled interaction among individuals, including marriages. While the town Métis may have been viewed with contempt by Whites, they were nonetheless proud of their identity, and they did not want to be confused with Indians.

Rourke commented that

> It interested me greatly to discover that the child of a mixed union is very proud indeed of his white blood, and considers himself a vastly superior person to his wholly "red" cousin. I have heard the one refer to the other as a "dirty little dog of an Indian boy" in tones conveying the most scathing contempt, and this the Indian meekly accepted...[n.d.:91].

Scollon reported that François Mandeville, a French Métis who lived in Fort Chipewyan for many years, considered himself to be French, not Native (R. Scollon 1979:44). Even today, Métis still contrast themselves to both Indians and Whites, although circumstances have led to ethnic processes which result in them defining themselves sometimes as "Whites" and sometimes as "Indians" (field journals).

Ethnic Processes

Smith has suggested that the division between the Mackenzie town and bush categories of people represented "...incipient class structures" (Derek Smith 1975:21), saying that "There is a fundamental distinction between people with a primary dependence on the land and people following a settlement or urban existence" (ibid.). Similarly, the Scollons have suggested there was a major difference between a bush and settlement "consciousness" (Scollon and Scollon 1977:37-38; R. Scollon 1979:39-41,45). These lifestyle and ideological components contributed to ethnic identity. However, the bases for this opposition may have been less during this period, as a result of town Métis being displaced by White southerners and the disappearance of many of the jobs they had formerly held. This trend began with the modernization of the fur trade in the 1920s and was completed by the late 1930s, when the former Métis HBC factor at Fort Chipewyan complained that his former employment was no longer open to him (and cf. Bonnycastle 1955:50).

These developments forced the town Métis to rely more on trapping and hunting for livelihood than they had. To the extent to which both Indians and Métis were opposed to Whites, and in terms of ethnic categories, some ethnic convergence between Indians and Métis may have begun at that time.

There was some potential for ethnic convergence between the Lac La Biche Métis at Big Point and the delta Chiepwyan, among whom they settled and with whom they could demonstrate kinship ties. Although these Métis retained their ethnic distinctiveness, including a distinct variety of Cree language, they intermarried (1934-1951) with four Chipewyan families. The delta Chipewyan were restricted by the park boundaries in their interaction with the park Chipewyan, so their cultural similarities and close marital links with the Lac La Biche Métis may have eventually resulted in some ethnic convergence with them. However, the creation of the Chipewyan reserve during this period led the Chipewyan to abandon Big Point and move to the reserve, especially Jackfish Lake and Old Fort. This residential separateness and the legal distinctions between them may have resulted in the offpsring of these marriages being absorbed into the Métis sector and the maintenance of ethnic boundaries.

The discussion in the previous two chapters has covered the impact of the park and the reserve on relations between park and delta Chipewyans. Park Chipewyans transfered to the Cree band as part of a strategy to gain a reserve within the boundaries of the park. Since then, these Chipewyans have been called Crees. This may have been purely an expedient action, the choice or manipulation of ethnic status in order to accomplish certain desired goals, particularly "...to obtain the resources one needs to survive and to consume" (Bennett 1975:3). However, it can also be seen as an instance of "ethno-transformation," part of the process involving

> ...a breaking down of earlier loyalties and a merging of old symbols from diverse cultural patterns into a new and self-conscious ideological framework that glorifies and crystallizes the new collectivity [Gonzalez 1975:120].

This interpretation, especially the idea that one's choice of ethnic group reflects a desire to express either social distance or solidarity (Nagata 1974:340), is argued in an earlier paper (McCormack 1979a).

The working out of all of these ethnic processes among the peoples in the region was interrupted by the movement of most residents of bush settlements to either Fort Chipewyan or the mill site at Sweetgrass Landing in the park, beginning about 1955 (chapters 7, 8). New processes were initiated as trappers and hunters were transformed into a partial proletariat and as a White middle class developed at Fort Chipewyan.

CONCLUSION

This period has been called the one in which Natives in the Fort Chipewyan region lost control of the land, their resource base, as the Canadian and provincial governments extended their activities into the north, imposing a regulatory regime that supported the capitalist mode of production and undermined the fur trade mode of production. This government action encouraged and followed entrepreneurial activity in trade, transport, fishing, and mining. Natives were removed from the resource base on which they relied to support their lifestyle. The resource base was depleted and even destroyed as a result of over-trapping and new extractive industries. Its use was regulated by government agents unwilling to involve the traditional Native users in writing land-use regulations. In other words, this early period of northern "development" was responsible for the process of underdevelopment and pauperization for the Natives.

Indians and Métis living in the bush found it hard to produce sufficient fur and game to meet requirements for subsistence and exchange. This resulted in some intra-band conflicts and jealousies, and it made the opposition between the communal ethic of sharing and the individualistic ethic of personal betterment more difficult. Also, people who required assistance were forced into individual relations of dependency and subordination via-à-vis the Indian Agent, traders, missionaries, park wardens, and other agents. By the middle of this period, all of these agents were White.

These adverse circumstances were sources of stress for both the individual and band. It seems remarkable that the fur trade mode of production and its associated lifeway persisted so long. This persistance suggests that people managed these stresses reasonably well. They utilized alternate food and fur resources, they placed younger and unproductive children in the mission, they took advantage of assistance provided by the Indian Agent, and generally they "made do." Residents of Fort Chipewyan who were asked how they managed during this period emphasized that in the bush there was always food to eat, though there might not be luxuries in some years (field journals 1977; 1978). The processes of ethnic division and convergence were positive responses to the problems Natives faced. Natives were assertive politically, with status Indians working through the Indian Agent in most instances.

However, their best efforts to deal with their problems did not solve the dilemma they faced, which was their lack of control over their means of production or over the institutions which had assumed this control and mediated between them and the outside world. Native people were forced to act within a framework of White economic, political, and social domination, which ruled out many possible solutions (cf. Manuel and Posluns 1974:53). They saw their efforts continually rebuffed, in particular the clever, last ditch strategy by the Crees and park Chipewyans to obtain a reserve in the park.

There are indications that at least some individuals reacted to this situation by feelings of bitterness and hopelessness about the possibility of real improvement for Natives. The failure of their 1944 effort to obtain a reserve surely must have led to feelings of frustration, especially after seeing the creation of a reserve in the delta. Negative responses to these stresses appear in accounts by individuals of interpersonal violence and in the major increase in the 1940s in charges and convictions for alcohol-related and criminal code offenses, including assault, theft, vagrancy, and neglect of one's family (Govt. of Alberta [GA] Charges and Convictions in Fort Chipewyan 1919-1950).

Numbers of these offenses and game-related offenses were not high for the 1920s and 1930s, and they stayed relatively constant (see fig. 9).[14] The graph in figure 9 shows the sharp increase in alcohol and criminal code offenses in the 1940s, especially in 1946, with 19 offenses, 27 offenses in 1947, and an unprecedented high of 48 offenses in 1948. Alcohol and property related offenses were most frequent. While it is possible that these figures could have been the result of increased vigilence by the RCMP rather than an increase in these behaviors, evidence from Stewart's journal suggests otherwise.

In the winter of 1946, Stewart reported, "Am receiving com-

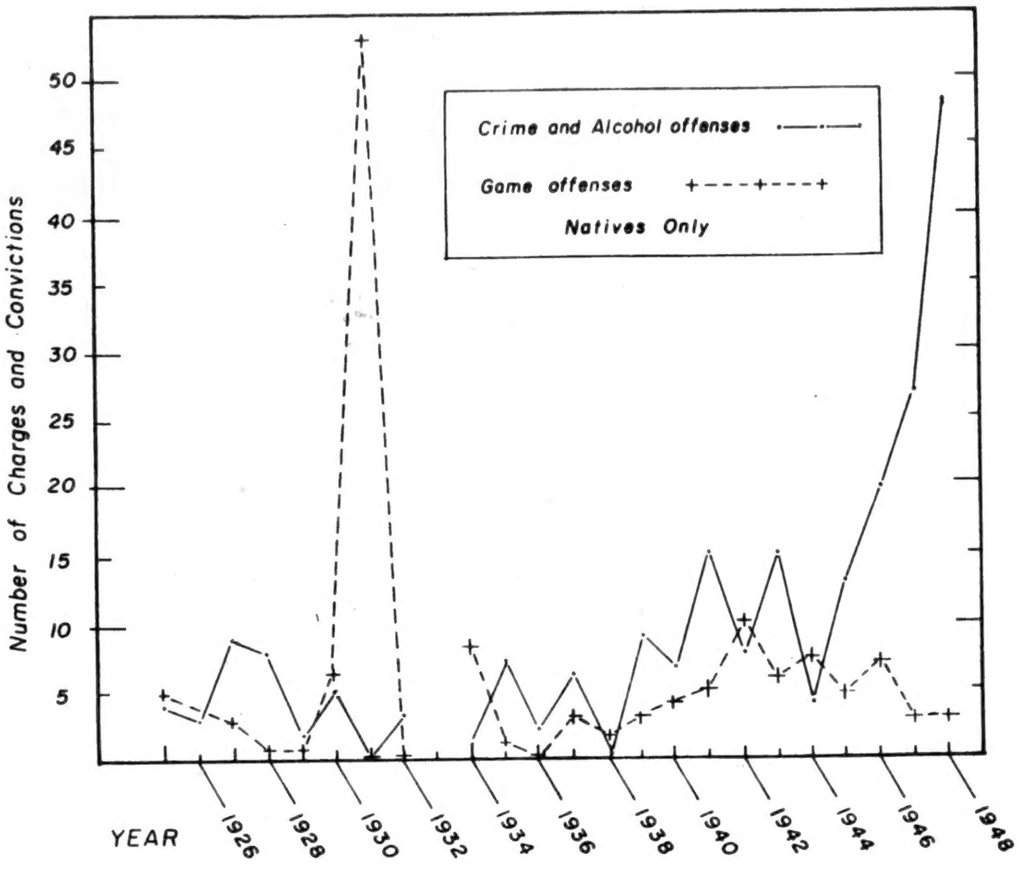

Figure 9. Charges and Convictions 1925-1948

plaints from Residents of Chipewyan about Drunkeness [*sic*] of Indians" (PAA Stewart 13 Nov. 1946; cf. 24 Nov. 1946). He had spoken to Corporal Robson of the RCMP many times, he said, but nothing or "...very little has been done" (*ibid*. 24 Nov. 1946). On December 29, he suggested that the trials held the previous day "...may be a start in the clearing up of drunkeness [*sic*] among the Indians here and also of those supplying it [liquor], these of course being most dangerous" (*ibid*. 29 Dec. 1946), a reference to the extent of the use of alcohol and to local brewing and bootlegging. Brewing which was observed in Fort Chipewyan in 1968 and bootlegging which was observed in 1977-78 may begin in this decade. As the statistical data indicate, these problems did not disappear in 1947. In January Stewart wrote, "I have had many Indians up on the carpet lately, have read the riot act to some and have advised the others" (*ibid*. 17 Jan. 1947). Later that year he commented that the Indians "...seem to have different brands of trouble this yea[r]," especially related to drinking (*ibid*. 16 July 1947). Stewart's entries suggest that the number of charges which were laid did not reflect the extent of the problem.

Other data indicate violence which did not result in formal charges being laid in most cases. Some older women have vivid memories of being beaten by their husbands while their husbands were drinking. As one woman said, the people made their own beer (homebrew) in the bush and put it up in sealers. As soon as the men came back from a trapping trip, they would begin to drink, and then "we get licking, and we don't know what for" (McCormack 1978). The ill-treatment which some women received at the hands of their husbands made them eager to move to town.

Wife-beating was not new in the 1940s. It was present in the

1920s. Rourke commented, "I have heard it said that wife-beating was unheard of amongst the Indians until they started to 'progress'" (n.d.: 157). While the extent to such violence is unknown, and it was certainly not present in every (or even most?) family, a comment by one theorist, C. Washburne, may apply here:

> In a society where...men typically beat their wives when drunk, it must certainly be suspected that long-smoldering frustrations are involved [1961:263].

He suggests that wife-beating is simply one type of physical aggression used as a way of dealing with frustration. Such aggression "...is typically directed at peers, but sometimes toward status inferiors, seldom toward status superiors" (ibid.:265).

There is a large,though inconclusive literature on the relationship between socio-economic problems and problems of drinking and violence. On the one hand, the use of alcohol is a pleasurable activity and one which is a source of solidarity among drinkers. On the other, alcohol is frequently associated with acts of violence and agression against both people and property. This is usually interpreted as "social pathology," the social disruption people experience as they lose control of their means of production and lack meaningful opportunities, thereby experiencing "anomie" (cf. inter alia Brody 1977:40; Kehoe 1973:15; Lemert 1958; Graves 1971; Cruikshank 1975; Lubart 1969:8; Jilek 1981; Jilek-Aall 1981; Berreman 1956). Brody explains,

> They are being progressively separated from the economic and social opportunities that they find meaningful, and thus are being pushed towards the bottom rungs of the class ladder [1977:42].

In other words, alcohol and aggression are both ways of dealing with feelings of frustration about one's personal situation.

In Fort Chipewyan, sources of frustration multiplied through this 30 year period. Manuel and Posluns say that the strength of the social fabric, or its ability to "...withstand the pressure that was being put upon it," rests on the strength of the traditional economy (1974:41). At Fort Chipewyan, these same decades saw the undermining of this economy and of the fur trade mode of production. People experienced increased difficulties in sustaining their automous way of life in the bush and were forced into relations of dependence with White agents. While most people did the best they could in the deteriorating situation, a few individuals appear to have resorted to violence and alcohol in their frustration, occasionally. It may be significant in this regard that the increase in charges and convictions in the 1940s most often involved Crees, who had failed in their efforts to obtain a reserve, and Lac La Biche Métis, who had even more interference than the Indians in their access to game and fur, but who did not have the protection of an Indian Agent to fall back on in hard times. The number of offenses by delta Chipewyans, who at least had a reserve, was low, and so was the number of offenses by park Chipewyans. However, not all such acts, especially violence against family members, led to formal charges.

The fur trade mode of production survived this period, and there was much continuity in Native life. However, the separation of Natives from the land and the development of their individual attachments to White agents indicates a situation in which there was a "preadaptation" to "proletarianization." Natives were being forced into a dependent relationship as a class without control over the means of production to the class which exerted that control. The class structure would solidify in the 1950s and 1960s. It was these three decades, therefore, that established the conditions for the post-war transformation of the fur trade mode of production, which had lasted for about a century, to a new "proletarianized" mode of production. This process of transformation is the subject of the remainder of the study.

NOTES

[1] Hamdon commented, "They call 'em kickers, eh, because they're cranky" (1978).

[2] The Eaton Catalogue also had a more subtle influence:

> ...many of the model dresses and coats bore names which were frequently adopted by the people,...and many a little mahogany-colored infant in the North answers to the name of Archibald, Bernadette, Evelyn, Phyllis, and the like; names gleaned from Eaton's Catalogue [Rourke n.d.:86].

[3] Dan Mah ran "...a local 'hash'-house, has two rooms for rent, and deals in a limited amount of merchandise." He sold bread for 24¢ a loaf, "...and the Indians go for the stuff" (Gillham 1947:16). His Athabasca Cafe still exists in Fort Chipewyan, run by a relative.

[4] Nieman (1980b:34-35) described what he called a funeral "potlach" at Lac La Biche in the 1920s, though I have never heard of this practice in Fort Chipewyan. The use of the term "potlach" must derive from his experiences in the Yukon; he probably meant some sort of formal give-away as part of a funeral.

[5] There was little or no drinking at the dances; the RCMP strictly enforced the prohibition on liquor in the north. Paul Nieman, who spent the winter of 1927-28 at Embarras, described a short-lived bootlegging operation he ran (1980a; 1980b).

[6] Genealogical evidence suggests that marriages may have been arranged occasionally as "trial" marriages, which often resulted in the

birth of a child before the marriage was solemnized by the priest. Some evidence suggests as well, however, that an improper pregnancy (by a man who would not marry the girl or who was unsuitable in some way) resulted in the child dying or being given away to a relative to raise. The girl would then be, effectively, childless and later married (cf. Knight 1968: 88-89 for a possibly similar situation among the Crees at Rupert House, James Bay)(AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.; field journals).

[7] The price of hang-fish has not increased as much as the cost of other items in the local commodities trade. In 1977, I purchased hang-fish for my dogs at 15¢ per fish, or $1.50 per stick, and the price is occasionally 20¢ per fish or even higher. A "rick" of wood, on the other hand, which cost $1.50 in the mid 1940s, and a cord, which cost about $3.00 (Hamdon 1978), in 1977 sold for $25 and $60 respectively, though it was possible to obtain wood for $8.00 per rick from some woodcutters. Hand-tanned moosehides, which are extremely desirable and in great demand, sell for well over $200, even when the quality is not the best (field journals 1977; 1978).

[8] There is one instance of a Cree family in which the father and sons used to play the drums and sing on a regular basis in the bush. When the father died, during the decade when most Indians were relocating to Fort Chipewyan or Sweetgrass Landing, the sons stopped drumming (field journal 1977 III:5). This instance is suggestive of Dunning's link between leadership and drumming.

[9] Translation of Duchaussois:

> Since April, influenza mows them down everywhere. Nearly all at the convent were attacked. Outside, at distances that the missionaries and sisters are unable to cover in time, it was terrible. About fifty of the

> savages are dead. They don't know how to nurse themselves. They no longer have the means, poor things. Mgr. Joussard brought help to the Montagnais [Chipewyans] and Father Jaslier to the Crees. They find almost everyone lying among the dying. Hunger adds to the sickness: they fast in all the camps. The missionaries came back to try to obtain all the available provisions to distribute to them. The Montagnais chief and his family were very far away when they were hit by the epidemic. They advanced painfully for several days, but soon the living were defeated and the dogs fell. They were then given as food the pelts which they brought: it was still insufficient; several perished and the people arrived here [at the convent] half dead. One of our former students, Marguerite, succombed on the way.

[10] Tuberculosis was present in at least two forms: pulmonary tuberculosis, or consumption, and tuberculosis lymphadenitis, known as scrofula (which can also be a non-tuberculous infection).

[11] Although generally people in the park appeared to obey the regulation which prohibited hunting bison, some individuals still poached animals from herds which may have contained diseased animals. Also, some evidence suggests that tuberculous bison could have contaminated the range, with the possibility that other animals hunted for food, such as moose, may have contracted tuberculosis.

[12] Translation of Duchaussois:

> Our nursing sister, s/he writes from Athabaska, is really the doctor of the country. All her interventions were successful till now. She is sought for trips of two to three days, in winter as in summer. Merely in 1925, she made 418 visits, executed 22 surgical operations, small or large, applied 906 treatments, gave 2,565 prescriptions, pulled out or filled I don't know how many teeth.

[13] Mike Dempsey, the chief Park Warden, married Rosalie Mercredi in 1927. Leising reported that he sometimes received "...snubs and saddle-burred remarks...because his wife was a native of Fort Chipewyan" (1959:74).

[14] Mrs. E. Hawkins, Court Services Liaison Officer in Edmonton,

kindly made this list of charges and convictions available to me. While the records do not appear to be complete, they provide invaluable information on offenses which resulted in charges, as well as on the sanctions which were imposed by the local magistrate. The figures used in this section were for Native offenders only, with surnames used to identify ethnicity.

THE NEW NORTH 1948-1965: DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Chapters 4-6 detailed the creation of an administrative structure for northern Alberta and the expansion of non-Native entrepreneurs and trappers into the Fort Chipewyan region. They showed the generally deleterious effects of these activities on the resident Native peoples. Their livelihood was undermined to such an extent that by the end of the 1940s, Natives were finding it difficult, if not impossible, to provide adequately for themselves without wage labor and/or social assistance as income supplements. Their use of the land had become heavily regulated and restricted, the land itself was not as productive as it had been, and alternate sources of income were badly needed. In other words, they were beginning to acquire some of the characteristics of a labor force, or proletariat.

However, the north had been only partially incorporated into the national political economy during the period ending in 1948. It was a region still dominated by the pre-capitalist structures of the fur trade era, though with parallel structures of a true class-capitalism increasing in importance as mining efforts became significant. Until World War II, Canada had been preoccupied with developing and consolidating the structures which would allow the Canadian state to incorporate fully the western plains and B.C. into the national system (cf. Phillips 1967:161-2; Rea 1968:47). Northern development policies had been guided by a laissez-faire philosophy (cf. Rea 1968), which meant that the government trusted to the forces of the marketplace to provide satisfactory incentives for and regulation of economic development.

At the same time, it is important to recognize the continuing involvement of government in the north in the pre-war period, as illustrated in the previous chapters. There had been approximately 30 to 50 years of direct supervision of the north by various federal and provincial government departments. They designed policies to accommodate all interested users of northern resources and to regulate their activities, in the interests of maintaining Canadian sovereignty, encouraging entrepreneurs, and creating a climate within which exploitation of resources could occur. Government may not have provided much direct financial assistance to northern economic schemes, but it nevertheless played a strongly supportive role *vis-à-vis* industry. Contrary to Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent's later assertions (cf. Phillips 1967:161-2; Rea 1968: 47), there had been a great deal of attention devoted to northern matters.

The political and economic imperatives of the war and the post-war period resulted in the Canadian decision to shift its national vision to the north and to initiate a second stage of national or state expansion into the north. Similarly, the provinces of Alberta and B.C. wanted to open their northern regions to exploration and exploitation. Their goal was the creation of a "modern" economy and new conditions for the production of surplus and the accumulation of capital. Northern development the "completion" of Canada, according to John Diefenbaker, the most eloquent proponent of the "northern vision" (cf. Newman 1963:69-70; Morisset 1981). This new period of expansion would occur in a context of new political and economic alignments, especially those with the U.S., and new ideologies about the roles of Native peoples. While the north would remain a periphery in the world system of capitalism, its role as a periphery would be transformed in the post-war period, when production was reorganized on a capitalist basis, through ownership of the means of production by entrepreneurs, who then hired labor.

Chapters 7 and 8 discuss this new era of expansion of government and business into the Fort Chipewyan region. They discuss and account for the consequences of economic, political, and social "development" for the social formation of the region and Native lifestyles and modes of production in particular, completing the analysis necessary to demonstrate the thesis of the study.

CHAPTER 7

NORTHERN CLASS-CAPITALISM

This chapter examines the changes in the economy of the Fort Chipewyan region following World War II. These changes were conditioned by war-time developments and the post-war expansion of the system of world capitalism, in which Canada became a junior partner to the U.S.[1] It was the federal government which had the most complete framework for northern development. This framework included both economic and social sides of the development process, including a definition of a new role for Native peoples as an integral part of the plan. It was predicated on two features. First, the fur trade no longer generated satisfactory profits, leading the government to believe that the fur trade was through as an economy and way of life, incapable of sustaining northern populations or contributing to the larger Canadian economy. Moreover, it was a hindrance to the growth of extractive industries, which required both the trappers' land and their labor. Secondly, the Canadian north was one new source of the raw materials needed by industry in Canada and the U.S. During the war the U.S. military projects had created the infrastructure which gave momentum to the growth of extractive industries. Because of the size of the U.S. branch plant economy in Canada, it stood to become the main beneficiary of northern resource exploitation. As transportation improved, first with the building or airstrips and modernized river transport during the war, and in the 1950s with extensive road upgrading and construction, the north was no longer as remote from markets as it had been. The explorations for precious and base metals and radioactive ores in the 1940s and earlier showed the promise of the north for non-renewable resource extraction; there were also renewable resources, such as fish and lumber, available.

The strategy developed by the federal government for "opening up" the north had several interrelated components. First, it encouraged the expansion of a capitalist mode of production based on extractive industry. Simultaneously, it discouraged the pre-capitalist fur trade. The 1950s saw the beginning of generous government investment and subsidy to stimulate the exploitation of northern resources. It also saw new measures meant to create a northern labor force to work for these new industries. These included policies which both forced and persuaded Native peoples to give up the "unprofitable" bush life and the bush communities in favor of settlement in administrative centers, where they could acquire education and seek jobs with industry as their major source of livelihood. Economic problems of the Native peoples were to be solved by integrating them into the mainstream of Canadian life, by having them abandon their traditional mode of production in order to participate as wage-laborers - a northern proletariat - in the new developments which were occurring in the north (cf. Hawthorne 1967:25; MacGregor 1974:170). The influential Hawthorne report (1966;1967) supported this solution, which emphasized

> ...education, vocational training and techniques of mobility to enable Indians to take employment in wage and salaried jobs. Development of locally available resources should be viewed as playing a secondary role for those who do not choose to seek outside employment [Hawthorne 1966:13].

By way of contrast, no one other than Natives ever suggested that indigenous residents of the north should become the owners of the northern industries. Ownership creates control, which was never considered as a possibility for northern peoples.

Secondly, the government developed systems designed to support the new economy and the development of a labor force and to ensure the acceptance and perpetuation of the new mode of production. The development of educational institutions and programs played a major role in this; they were tied to the development of social assistance programs. Integration and equality of opportunity became the guiding themes of new Indian policies throughout Canada, including the north. Money spent on bettering the physical conditions of people who were to become the northern labor force would enable them to participate more effectively, at least in theory, in the post-war economy. Therefore, the government could justify relatively large expenditures on such programs. While humanitarian goals did exist, they should not be allowed to obscure the economic realities related to the expansion of capitalism into the Canadian north.

The immediate implication of these general considerations for theFort Chipewyan region was that the state intervened in two directions. First, it encouraged industry to move into the region, and it actively participated in business endeavors. Where necessary, it severed remaining Native control over resources or ties to the land so as to allow industrial access to these resources for exploitative activities. Secondly, it legitimated this through policies of economic, political, and social development. It implemented programs which redefined the role of the state and of the local residents in the northern, provincial, and national social formations.

Generally, the federal developments were more important to the Fort Chipewyan than provincial ones during this period. It was the federal government which administered the park and its residents, the Chipewyan reserve, both bands of Indians, and which exerted control over the town of Fort Chipewyan, which served as a minor administrative center. The federal government was also responsible for the growth of the Beaverlodge-Uranium City region, at the east end of Lake Athabasca, which had some impact on the Fort Chipewyan region. The Government of Alberta concentrated its energies to the south, on oil sands development, and to the west, on a transportation corridor through the Peace River country to the NWT. Later, the Government of British Columbia developed a major hydroelectric project on the Peace River that would wreak havoc in the Peace-Athabasca delta in 1968.

Federal and provincial governments had different interests and projects, but all were motivated by similar considerations, and there was convergence between their diverse efforts. Together they established a new pro-"development" context which resulted in the redefinition of government programs for the Fort Chipewyan region. As this chapter will show, the development which they envisioned would be detrimental to Native interests. It would not solve Native problems, but it would create new ones such as Native dependence on wage labor and Native lack of control over resources and the process of industrial exploitation.

The next section will consider the continued difficulties trappers experienced and the various strategies they pursued in their efforts to provide for themselves and their families. Wage labor was a major strategy in the 1950s and 1960s. This discussion will be followed by a brief outline of the development of the administrative structures and infrastructures which would enable and support entrepreneurial activities in the region. Finally, it will consider entrepreneurial activities in the three jurisdictions which played a role in the region: the federal government and its schemes for Wood Buffalo Park, Alberta and the situation of Chipewyan Indians, and the Bennett Dam on the Peace River in British Columbia.

THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY IN TRANSITION

Chapter 5 discussed the decline of the fur trade economy during the 1940s, caused by the scarcity of fur bearers and big game and the poor prices paid for fur. The introduction of restricted trapping areas removed some of the trapper's flexibility to deal with this situation. Also, prices of goods purchased rose as a result of post-war inflation. These developments created difficulties for Native peoples trying to support themselves through their traditional fur-trade based economy. They found it increasingly difficult and sometimes impossible to obtain sufficient fur and game to meet their subsistence and exchange requirements. By the mid 1940s they had begun to turn to both social assistance and wage labor as alternate or supplementary sources of income.

Troubles with Trapping

The best information available comes from Indian Agent Jack Stewart's journals. He was the intermediary between status Indians and government agencies and private entrepreneurs. It was to Stewart that the local Indians brought their complaints about the difficulties they faced in the bush. It was Stewart who was responsible for providing them with social assistance when necessary, and he was also their employment officer. His journal entries show both the deterioration of the fur trade economy and the persistent but often fruitless efforts of the Native peoples to cope with their difficult situation. The problems were the lack of fur, poor prices paid for fur, inflation in the prices of store goods, and the lack of a reliable credit system to carry them over a period of lean years.

Difficulties with the system of credit issued by the traders to capitalize the trappers' operations had become evident during the 1940s. Earlier, the long-term, personal relationships which existed between Natives and the traders allowed the traders to issue credit even when they expected little return. Credit levels may have remained relatively constant because of the on-going nature of the exchange. By the mid 1940s, credit had become impersonalized and was strictly a matter of business. Stewart commented on the opportunism of the traders in 1949, when he wrote,

> Many Indians coming in complaining of having nothing to eat this after the big hunts that were made last spring, It would appear that the issue of credit to Indians through stores would have to be controlled or the Indians Income controlled. In good years the stores load them up with debt and it takes all their hunt to pay for it [PAA Stewart 12 Aug. 1949].

Moreover, the credit which was issued during the 1950s and '60s was undermined in value by the inflation in the prices of trade goods which marked the period (cf. ibid. 20 Nov. 1950). When the fur trade declined during the first half of the 1950s, the stores occasionally cut off credit completely. It was generally given to the best trappers, who may have been the individuals least in need. It is possible that this restricted availability of credit acted as a wedge between individuals and families in the region, although the internal exchange network among families resulted in a wider sharing of such benefits.

The change in the credit system removed the financial underpinnings of the fur trade economy. The difficulty in obtaining credit faced by the Natives increased the stress created by the lack of fur, the poor prices of fur, and the inflation in the cost of trade goods. Wage labor was supposed to substitute for credit. This expectation was only partially realized, as the following sections in this chapter will show. To a large extent, it was social assistance, supplemented by wage labor, which replaced credit as the mainstay of the Fort Chipewyan economy.

The trappers in the Fort Chipewyan region had a significant advantage over trappers in many other northern areas, because the Peace-Athabasca delta was so rich in muskrats, the bread-and-butter fur of the trade. W. A. Fuller investigated the muskrats and their important role in the local economy during the late 1940s. In 1950, he reported that the muskrats in the Fort Chipewyan region appeared to follow the ten year muskrat cycle documented elsewhere. There had been "...a pronounced low from 1945 to 1947 which has been followed by two much better years" in the park (Fuller 1951a:55). He predicted that 1950 would bring a "...peak crop" (ibid.). His predictions were borne out in the fall of 1950 (cf. PAA Stewart 20 Nov. 1950; Church 1976:104). The following spring, however, the muskrats began to die off (PAA Stewart 19 May 1951). In December of 1951, Stewart wrote,

> [T]he hunts this year are small, rats are scarce there are no Ermine, and mink are also scarce. there are lots of foxes but the traders are not keen on buying them, and pay only 1^{00} and 1^{50} which is no incentative [sic] to the Indians to kill them [ibid. 12 Dec. 1951].

This low population of muskrats persisted through 1955. Muskrat numbers did not recover until the spring of 1956 (various entries PAA Stewart 1952-1956; cf. Church 1976:104-112).

To make matters worse, the prices paid for furs during these years were poor. Even when trappers could have received a good price for muskrat pelts, there were few to be found (cf. PAA Stewart 3 Feb. 1953). There was no marketing system to purchase the furs from the trappers and hold them until prices rose. Furs were almost always sold the same season they were trapped, which did not allow the trapper to take advantage of the best prices.

As Stewart pointed out, poor hunts, combined with poor prices for furs, meant that stores would not issue much credit to trappers. Even the hunting for game was often poor. People were both food-poor and cash-poor. Some families faced destitution (cf. PAA Stewart 25 Jan. 1954; 7 Oct. 1954). They turned to Stewart for the assistance they could not get through the traders:

> We are being forced to issue some emergency rations to families moving to the bush, so that they will have somethng to keep them until they kill some fur [ibid. 11 Oct. 1954].

Stewart believed that the traders should have acted more responsibly toward the Natives during this difficult period:

> If the traders would keep the level of credit they are issuing this year in the good years also these Indians would be better off, their debts would be small and anything they killed would be their own instead of the traders [ibid. 14 Oct. 1954].

Muskrat numbers recovered in 1956, but prices were low (ibid. 27 May 1957; 10 Dec. 1957). In the spring of 1958, there was a major spring flood which led to the loss of the best part of the muskrat season,

> ...and then the traders towards the last did not care if they bought fur or not, which brought the price down very low, beaver prices were terrible one lot of 18 bring 75^{00} and one lot of 6 bring 20^{00} [ibid. 23 June 1958].

Once again, many local trappers faced destitution (ibid. 24 Dec. 1958).

The fur trade had become a precarious system on which to base one's livelihood. In some years, furs might be plentiful, but prices poor. In others, furs were in short supply, while prices were high. Goods in the stores were costly. Game was not reliable. Traders could no longer be counted upon to help out in bad times; their income came increasingly from retailing rather than trading furs. The Native peoples of the region were encouraged by Stewart to combat this situation both by trying to stay in the bush and by turning to wage labor.

Efforts to Cope: Trapping

Since trappers had no control over prices of furs or goods during the 1950s and into the 1960s, their major strategy for coping with poor fur prices was to increase their production of furs, when possible, in order to keep their incomes up. However, they were limited in this by the availability of fur in the trapping areas to which they had been assigned. Therefore, they tried to increase their flexibility in terms of the trapping areas available to them and they tried to increase the productivity of these areas. Park and Alberta Natives handled these problems in different ways, which reflected the different regulations governing trapping in the two jurisdictions.

In 1949, the park administration had established large group trapping areas for Indians and individual trapping areas for Métis and the few non-Native trappers who remained in the park. The group trapping areas allowed the trappers a large amount of flexibility and control in choosing where and how to trap. They had resisted the imposition of this system, however, and at least some park Indians responded to the new restrictions imposed on their trapping areas by ignoring the boundaries which were drawn. There was a dispute over trapping area boundaries in the Big Slough area between the Little Red River band and the Fort Chipewyan Cree band in 1950, just after the new regulations were brought in. When the Indians were unable to resolve the dispute, the park superintendent did so for them, and two trappers of the Cree band lost a lot of "...their old established traplines..." (PAA Stewart 15 Aug. 1950; cf. 10 March 1950). There is no evidence that they were compensated for this loss.

The Cree band requested that a communal muskrat hunting area be created in the delta in the park "...so that any trapper who had no rats could go there and trap..." (PAA Stewart 18 June 1951). Stewart had hoped that such a communal area would be established when the park was divided into group and individual trapping areas, but the proposal was never implemented. For the park to carve out a communal area now would have meant taking trapping territory away from some of the individual lines and probably some of the group areas. The park officials refused to consider this request.

In Alberta, the only true group trapping area was the Chipewyan reserve, which was reserved for Chipewyan Indians. Elsewhere, all trappers were tied to individual traplines, which were turned into trapping areas about 1951. The significance of this change in terms of land use is not evident. Chipewyan Indians who had access to the reserve also had individual traplines. Indians and Métis coped with the restrictions imposed by trapping area boundaries by cooperating with kinsmen on an informal basis. Although there is not much information about the 1950s available, it appears that traplines could be reassigned fairly easily, with the consent of all individuals concerned. The result of this flexibility is that family groupings in trapping areas have emerged: various combinations of male kinsmen, especially brothers, have adjacent trapping areas and often cooperate with one another in working their lines (cf. field journal 1977 II:40-47).[2] These are functionally equivalent to the group trapping areas in the park.

Several trappers in both the park and Alberta engaged in illegal beaver trapping, a time-honored technique for dealing with restrictions on trapping. Those trappers who were caught at it were fined, and at least seven park trappers lost their permits, though whether temporarily or permanently is not known (memo from W. G. Brown to G. E. B. Sinclair, 20 July 1951, PAC RG 85 v. 1191 file 400-2-3 pt. 4).

This suggests that there was little that Native trappers could do to improve their situation. The difficulties they faced led to a decline in trapping in the late 1950s. People may have been reluctant to invest time, energy, and money in trapping, when they could not hope for a worthwhile return on their investment. Stewart mentioned in 1958 that "Some of the younger men are not too keen on trapping this spring, the price of fur is probably the cause" (PAA Stewart 27 Feb. 1958). Some of them "...had wonderful excuses" for not going trapping (ibid. 11 March 1958). Al Stucko, the Area Manager for the park in the 1970s, reported that the amount of trapping fell off by 19 percent from 1963 to 1970. His explanation was that

> This is primarily due to the older generation not being physically capable of pursuing this type of activity. The young generation is interested in more lucrative jobs with security and better social opportunities ["Report: Trapping and Hunting Activities," n.d., WBNP].

This decline in trapping coincided with the expansion of the local lumber industry.

Ultimately, it was because some people were leaving the trapping life that trapping returned as an acceptable alternative for those who chose to remain in the bush. The same number of animals would be divided among fewer trappers, increasing the "fiscal carrying capacity" of trapping areas. The change was made easily in the group areas in the park, but it was somewhat more difficult to accomplish in the individual trapping areas of Alberta. Later, some of these areas were abandoned and amalgamated with the areas of active trappers, resulting in larger and potentially more productive areas (field journal 1977 II:45).[3]

The main difficulty with this "solution" was that it undermined the bush communities. Survival in the bush meant that some individuals and their families had to leave the bush. Stewart encouraged young men, in particular, to turn to wage labor. The fact that many trappers and their families left the bush to search for wage labor was a factor in the eventual elimination of these traditional communities between 1955 and 1965.

To summarize, there was little that local people could do to cope with the problems in the fur trade during these decades. If they were status Indians, they could rely on some assistance from Stewart to help capitalize their operations in the bush or simply to tide them over. It is unlikely that Métis and non-status Indians had similar support from the provincial government; there was little assistance available for them (field journals 1977). If so, their situation was worse than that of the status Indians. People assisted one another, as they had always done. Many left the bush in search of wage labor or the social assistance available to them in Fort Chipewyan. The trappers who remained in the bush could intensify fur production and "make do," even in a time of poor fur prices (field journals 1977; 1978).

Efforts to Cope: Wage Labor

While Stewart was willing to provide interim social assistance in limited amounts to status Indians, he preferred to help his charges find employment as an alternative to the fur trade. He believed that "honest" labor was preferable for their self-image and self-reliance, and of course it was considerably cheaper for the government. Non-status Indians and Métis may not have had a choice.

The 1950s saw the beginning of many new enterprises in the region, some of which continued through the 1960s. Natives from the park could fish commercially for McInnes Corporation in the park, and they were recruited in the winter to put up ice for the summer fishing season. Commercial fishing began again on Lake Athabasca, although the labor force consisted mainly of outsiders. A major source of employment was the lumbering that began in the 1950s in the park and continued until the mid 1970s. Natives in the park were employed by park officials to build corrals and other facilities for the bison slaughter program, and to participate in the slaughter. Natives also worked on the road which was to run from Peace Point to the western edge of the park. They could do some brushing for the federal government along the Athabasca River and fight fires. They could leave the area and go east to the uranium mines at Gunnar and Uranium City. There was employment in Fort Chipewyan itself, in building the new school, a road to connect the mission and school complex with the town, and building status Indian housing ("treaty" housing). There was some employment available to women in the mission's kitchen, laundry, and sewing room.

Many men and some women took advantage of these various job opportunities as a direct rusult of difficulties in the fur trade (cf. La Rusic 1979:B13-14). On March 26, 1953, Stewart wrote that with prices for furs low and muskrats scarce, "Many Indians are already coming in asking me to try and get work for them this summer." So many men had gone looking for work that year that there were too few to hold a treaty meeting with the Cree band (PAA Stewart 12 June 1953). As well, "Many of the men [of the Chipewyan band] were away and some families had moved away looking for work" (ibid. 15 June 1953), especially at Gunnar and Uranium City. Stewart paid treaty to Fort Chipewyan Indians at Uranium City, Peace River Sawmill, and Fort Chipewyan that year (ibid. 23 June 1953; 3 July 1953).

Various items from Stewart's journals and interviews with Fort Chipewyan residents (field journals 1977; 1978; McCormack 1978; Parker 1978) show that people continued to seek paid employment during the 1950s and 1960s. Many Natives sought wage labor in the summer and continued to trap in the winter (eg., field journal 1978 VIII:11). However, when trapping remained poor, and jobs became available over the winter, especially at the uranium mines and at Swanson's Lumber, it is not surprising that more people looked for jobs in winter as well. This change in winter activity occurred by the end of the 1950s. It may be significant that the self-image of the Natives appears to have changed: trappers who applied for renewal of their trapping licences in Alberta were asked to state their occupation(s). Although some men wrote "trapper," more commonly they wrote "trapper-labourer" or simply "labourer." Occasionally a specific occupation, such as "deck-hand," was listed (Alberta Park and Wildlife, Fort Chipewyan trappers' applications for licences).

It is difficult to estimate the economic impact of this employment without greater access to government records than is now available. La Rusic discussed a parallel situation for Cree Indians incentral Quebec. They were forced into wage labor by a deteriorating fur trade economy. He concluded that the Cree

> ...were cast in the role of a cheap labour force, available and willing natives in the new colony of the north. They could make up the needed gangs of unskilled labour. Convenient, for they were there year-round, an almost captive labour force, which did not have to be provided with any of the most fundamental demands of White workers from the south: job security, advancement, equivalent pay, steady employment, or even the dignity of being accepted as an equivalent member of the human race [La Rusic 1970:B17-18].

His analysis applies to the Natives of the Fort Chipewyan region, as this and subsequent sections will demonstrate. Jobs in the region which were available to Natives were generally unskilled, poorly paid, and short-term. Although jobs were often the only source of cash which people had, Native workers did not earn enough money to allow them to support their families. Stewart occasionally issued relief to families "...where the husband has left for work and also to other families to travel to Uranium to look for work" (PAA Stewart 9 July 1953). Employment was uncertain. By 1960, Stewart wrote that "Many of our men are unemployed and there is no work available. Many of these men have large families" (ibid. 2 Aug. 1960).

Summary

The fur trade difficulties which had begun to intensify in the 1940s continued throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s as a result of the decline in numbers of muskrats, the most important fur of the local trapping economy. Prices paid for furs were low, and the cost of trade goods was high. Traders refused to extend credit to trappers who might not be able to repay it in the near future. Underlying this situation was a government policy which did not support the fur trade, but which viewed it as an obsolete economy and was therefore unwilling to invest development funds into that sector.

Some Indians and Métis attempted to remain in the bush, at least in the winter. Stewart encouraged them to do so in the summer as well, especially if they could not find work, to feed themselves with bush foods rather than rely on his stock of rations:

> quite a few [Indians] have been unable to procure work and I have been after them to move out of the village back to their camps where there is good fishing [PAA Stewart 5 July 1954].

He was only partially successful in this, for several reasons. First, in some areas the fishing was not as good as it had been, because of the declines in fish populations that followed the commencement of commercial fishing on Lake Claire and Jackfish Lake (see below). Secondly, the summer season was traditionally spent putting up both fish and meat for the winter hunting-trapping season, which disappeared for many people because of the lack of fur and game and the restrictions on hunting. Finally, people in bush camps could not be notified easily if jobs became available. This reason may have been the most important. Many Natives concluded that it was better to spend their summers in Fort Chipewyan rather than in the bush, even if it meant living on welfare. They could set some nets in the lake for fish, they could visit with their relatives and friends, and they could hope that a job would be found. The bush must have become a lonely place for the people who chose to stay there.

Many people found jobs through the help of Jack Stewart. The mission and the RCMP also recruited workers for particular projects. Eventually, people were able to apply directly to companies or park staff for jobs, such as the various lumbering enterprises. There was a variety of jobs available throughout the 1950s, but they were all unskilled and poorly paid. Few offered security to the people who took them.

The following sections will discuss the new industries which entered the region and the role of Native labor within each. Although Natives were generally unhappy with their situation, they did not take action until the 1960s, when they began to protest the lack of control they held over the changes occurring in their homeland. The following chapter will return to the topic of Native efforts to cope with their situation and a discussion of their efforts to improve their economic situation and of the long term consequences of this transformation of their bush economy and their new reliance on jobs which failed to meet their economic and other expectations.

WOOD BUFFALO PARK: OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The park administration adhered to an anti-development policy for its first three decades. This policy changed at the end of the 1940s, due to new government attitudes toward development of northern resources and due to an increased awareness of the problems and potentials of the bison herds. Beginning in 1950, these changes were confirmed by a series of administrative shuffles by the federal government to recognize, accommodate, and facilitate northern development.

In that year, the Department of Mines and Resources was abolished and replaced by three new departments: Resources and Development, Mines and Technical Surveys, and Citizenship and Immigration. The new Department of Resources and Development contained the Development Services Branch, which in turn included "Northern Administration," the division responsible for Wood Buffalo Park. Late in the same year the Development Services Branch was abolished and replaced by the

Northern Administration and Lands Branch, which continued to administer the park. The National Parks Branch was a parallel structure which was responsible for southern parks. Status Indians were administered by the Citizenship Department (Lothian 1977:19; Rea 1968:46).

In December 1953, Parliament created the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. It was designed "...to give more emphasis to the importance of northern Canada and its economic development" (Lothian 1977:20; cf. Rea 1968:45). This new department prepared a major brief on northern development which was submitted by R. G. Robertson, the Commissioner of the NWT, to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects in 1955 (Robertson 1955; Rea 1968:265). The brief emphasized the desirability of constructing a railway to Great Slave Lake, not just to serve the Pine Point mine, but also to "open up" other regions for development. Rea concludes that the argument "...was an attempt to extend the old arguments for a national railway policy to the new northern mining frontier..." (1968:265). The "'immense benefits'" would justify the immense costs (*ibid*.:266).

The Liberals were prevented from acting on these recommendations by their fall from power in the 1957 federal election. It was Diefenbaker who announced the need for a "New Frontier Policy" for northern development (Diefenbaker 1976:11), stemming from his "Northern Vision" (Newman 1963:69-70,217-218), which Peter Newman claims was inspired by Alvin Hamilton, the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. The most important part of the Northern Vision was the "Roads to Resources Programme," which involved extensive road construction in the territories and the northern parts of the provinces through federal-provincial cost-sharing (cf. *inter alia* Rea 1968:243-4; Newman 1963:219). As Rea points out, these were roads designed to open up new areas for exploration and, hopefully, exploitation, but they were not necessarily justified by the commercial feasibility of immediate projects (Rea 1976:54; 1968:242, 244). The budget of Northern Affairs increased from $34 million in the last year of Liberal rule to $71.7 million for the 1958-59 fiscal year (Newman 1963:222).

Alberta, eager for outside financing for its own development projects, took advantage of this new program. It had earlier constructed the Mackenzie Highway in partnership with the federal government. This highway ran from Grimshaw, Alberta, to Hay River, NWT, and it was completed in 1949 (Rea 1968:238; Gibson 1978:20). Alberta now cooperated with the federal govenrment in the construction of the Great Slave Lake Railway, which ran from Roma, Alberta, to Hay River and then to the new lead-zinc mine at Pine Point. The railway was completed in 1966 (Rea 1968:263-7; 1976:100; Gibson 1978:20-21). The highway and railway ended the Athabasca River transport system to the NWT: 1967 was the last year that freight was shipped via Smith Portage (Mackinnon 1980:32).

Another consequence of this north-south transportation link was road construction in the NWT. The federal government extended the Mackenzie Highway from Hay River to Pine Point and eventually to Fort Smith and into the park, thereby providing the first direct, though long, road link between the park and southern Canada. In 1957 the park initiated six years of internal road building, primarily to serve the lumber and bison slaughter operations which developed there in the 1950s. This building program included the clearing of the right-of-way for a proposed road from Peace Point to the west boundary of the park, where it would have been able to meet a road that Alberta had built from the Mackenzie Highway to Fort Vermilion (cf. McCormack 1978; Rea 1976:101; Lothian 1976:64). Many local residents found temporary work with the project (various entries PAA Stewart 1958; 1959).

Newman suggests that the early momentum of the Diefenbaker period under Hamilton faltered when the less imaginative Walter Dinsdale took over the northern portfolio in 1969 (1963:222). However, when the Liberals returned to power in 1963, they continued to expand the government's role and to support business interests in the north. They were responsible for transferring the administration of the park from Northern Affairs to the National and Historic Sites Branch, on October 1, 1964. Two years later, in June 1966, the Department of Indian Affairs was created, an event which led to the reorganization of national parks affairs, including those of Wood Buffalo Park, although these developments are beyond the scope of this discussion.

Because the park was administered by development-oriented departments until 1964, it was open to development schemes considered to be in the interests of the Natives, or the national economy, or the northern economy, not necessarily in that order. These included commercial fishing on Lake Claire, several lumbering operations, and a commercial bison slaughter program. The government called these "management" programs, but they were commercial enterprises begun prior to approval of policy. In other words, "development" in the park was approved on an _ad hoc_ basis, with policy developed simultaneously or subsequently to rationalize what had taken place. Little or no long term planning was evident. The following sections discuss each of these enterprises in terms of their rationale and the decision-making process, their manner of operation, and their short term and long term impact on the Native people in the park.

COMMERCIAL FISHING ON LAKE CLAIRE

Renewed Efforts to Gain Access

The McInnes Corporation had tried before and during World War II to expand its commercial fishing operation to Lake Mamawi and Lake Claire within the park. William Schlader, the manager of the company, had appealed,

> It seems a pity that they [goldeye] must live their life cycle and die, without being of benefit to humans, especially in these days when meat and fish flest is is scarce. Apart from that, we cannot see any reasonable harm being done to the parks area because it is so remote that we question if ever in our time the grounds would ever be of use to anyone, other than as a producer of food [letter from W. Schlader to James Smart, Controller, Dept. of Nat. Parks Bureau, 20 July 1943, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

The company was denied permission because of strong local opposition. Residents were afraid that a commercial fishery within the park would hurt the domestic fishery, on which many of them relied for summer and winter food for themselves and their dogs.

Nevertheless, in the summer of 1947, Dr. William Sprules, a biologist with the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, investigated the fish potentials of both lakes. The Toronto Daily Star reported Sprules' findings in an article published December 5, 1947 ("New Fishing Ground Rich in Goldeyes," PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). Sprules supported a commercial fishery, though he did mention one possible impediment, the "...opposition from scattered Indian bands in the territory who hold an antipathy toward commercial fishing" (ibid.). This public report was published prior to the park administration receiving a copy of the study from the Fisheries Research Board. Park officials were understandably annoyed.[4] They sent a strongly worded memo to the Board, rebuking it for releasing the study to the public (memo from R. A. Gibson to K. H. Doan, 16 Dec. 1947, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). Gibson requested that no further publicity be given to the study, and he informed Fisheries that contrary to its expectations, the policy of the park regarding its fish resources had not been set (ibid.).

McInnes Corporation applied considerable political pressure in January and February to convince the federal government to support Sprules' recommendations. Schlader wrote to Jas. A. MacKinnon, the Minister of Fisheries,

> ...the Parks Bureau hasn't taken kindly to any thought of permitting commercial fishing operations within the park. However, we cannot see any reason for any harm being done. The area itself is in the remote district, far from any human habitation, and for that reason we cannot see harm being done in taking them [goldeye], providing of course that the poundage is kept within reason [letter from W. Schlader to MacKinnon, 22 Jan. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

He added that goldeye was a considerable tourist attraction. Therefore, "It does seem that in order to keep up this attraction no harm would be done in taking at least some of them from this area" (ibid.). Schlader neglected to note that the Lake Winnipeg goldeye had been depleted by overfishing, despite government quotas; he did not consider depletion of fish stocks to be a harmful consequence of fishing. Although he asserted in this letter that there was no human habitation in the area, in a subsequent letter to the Minister he claimed that not only did Indians live there, but that "...a number of them..." were fishing for McInnes and working in its associated transport operation (letter from W. Schlader to MacKinnon, 7 Feb. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).

In fact, few Indians or Métis worked for McInnes; Roy Schlader, William's son, recalls that in 1945, when McInnes left Lake Athabasca for Great Slave Lake, only eight to twelve local people worked in the fishery (Schlader 1978).

Minister MacKinnon followed up Schlader's request by writing to J. A. Glen, the Minister of Mines and Resources, on February 9, 1948. He asked Glen to consider licencing McInnes to take goldeye on an experimental basis in the 1948 season, using Indians as fishermen. He saw this plan as one small aspect of the overall development of the northwest (letter form MacKinnon to J. A. Glen, 9 Feb. 1938, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).

However, objections had already been lodged by Jack Stewart to this proposal. He sent a memo to R. A. Hoey, the Director of Indian Affairs, expressing his concerns about a goldeye fishery:

> We have seen what commercial fishermen could do to a much larger lake [Lake Athabasca] and it is felt that they will do the same to Lake Claire [memo from J. W. Stewart to R. A. Hoey, 5 Jan. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A].

Similarly, a discussion of commercial fishing in the park prepared by park officials noted,

> ...the natives of Chipewyan area are complaining that the operations of the McInnis [*sic*] Products Corporation has resulted in depletion of the fish supply of Lake Athabaska and the natives are unable to obtain fish in sufficient quantities for their requirements.
>
> There would be considerable resentment on the part of the native population if the regulations were amended to permit of commercial fishing in these [park] lakes [precis re: commercial fishing southern area WBP, 9 Feb. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

Government officials discounted these concerns. Hoey did not question the wisdom of allowing the fishery, suggesting merely, "...if commercial fishing were allowed, that the companies who might get the business be required to hire Indians for this work" (extract from G. H. Gooderham's letter of 12 Jan. 1948, from R. A. Hoey, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).[5] A precis prepared regarding the possibility of allowing commercial fishing in the southern part of the park related the fishery to the economic problems faced by the Native residents. It suggested that if a "management project" were to be undertaken "...to harvest the surplus fish in the Lake Claire-Lake Mamawi area," there should be "...maximum employment to the local natives" (precis re: commercial fishing southern part WBP, 9 Feb. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).

This correspondence reveals the paternalism of park and Indian Affairs official decision-makers. They assumed they knew better than did the Indians what was good for them. Where Stewart and the Indians were fearful that a commercial fishery might make a bad situation worse, these officials believed that it would be a benefit. It was this latter opinion which became the conventional wisdom. Once adopted, it was not longer debated in subsequent projects. The key to "development" and exploitation in Wood Buffalo Park had been found.

The officials of the park also tried to justify the commercial fishery on Lake Claire on its merits as a fishery. One memo suggested that the taking of Lake Claire goldeye "...could very reasonably be considered a beneficial operation from a fish cultural standpoint," as permitted by the National Parks Regulations (memo from Controller? to Richards, 13 Feb. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). This phrasing probably meant that commercial fishing would actually benefit the fish populations by removing "superfluous" or mature fish.

By the end of February, 1948, another memo was discussing not the merits of whether or not a fishery should be allowed, but how it should be structured. The memo proposed limiting the number of outsiders who could be brought in to fish or to process fish to 25 percent. That would mean that local Native labor would do at least 75 percent or more of the work. The company should provide training and should assist in equipping the local fishermen, who did not have the necessary capital or equipment (memo from Director to Meikle, 23 Feb. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). The commercial fishery was a *fait accompli*, to be established for the benefit of the Indians, although apparently neither Stewart nor the bands were consulted regarding the terms of the agreement which would be drafted (cf. Schlader 1978; PAA Stewart 1948).

The 1948 Fishery: An Experimental Operation

On May 4, 1948, McInnes Products Corporation Limited was licenced to fish in Lake Claire. Key clauses in this agreement were that 75 percent of the total amount in wages or salaries to laborers in the operation would go to "Indians and half-breeds" (clause no. 9). The company was to supply food and lodging for the Indians and half-breeds working in the operation, but it was to deduct the costs from the Natives' incomes. These charges were to be approved by the Minister of the Department of Mines and Resources (clause no. 12). This clause allowed McInnes to provide a commissary. McInnes also was to supply fish for the government dogs staked out at Lake Mamawi (clause no. 4). The Company was to pay a royalty of five percent of the gross receipts from the sale of the fish to the Minister (clause no. 10). The operation was to last from June 1 to July 15 (clause no. 1), with a quota of 250,000 pounds of goldeye (Fishing Licence, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1; cf. Appendix 1).

Although another company, Alaska Fisheries, based in Edmonton, had also applied to fish Lake Claire in 1948, only McInnes was granted a licence for this first, experimental season (cf. letter from E. Landa, Alaska Fisheries, to H. V. Dempsey, Chief Supervisor of Fisheries, 15 April 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).

Shortly after the licence was issued, McInnes informed park officials that it intended to pay five cents per pound for dressed goldeye if the Indians supplied their own nets, and less three-quarters cent per pound if nets were supplied by the company, to cover depreciation on nets and skiffs. The company would pay two cents per pound for jackfish and pickerel. It planned to discard the many thousands of other fish that would also be caught.

The fishery began in earnest on May 22, 1948, when McInnes asked Stewart to find nineteen fishermen among the park Indians (PAA Stewart 22 May 1948). In all, there were eighteen Indian crews (letter from Victor E. F. Solman to Dr. Harrison F. Lewis, Chief, Dominion Wildlife Service, 11 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1), probably of two Indians each.

Although the Indians had objected to the fishery, they went to work for McInnes. They needed the wages and the discarded fish they could dry. A memo written on June 10, 1948, detailed some of the impact of this first operation:

> Considerable change was observed in the living conditions of the Indians between this year and last year. This year they are all camped in the vicinity of McInnes camp and are being supplied with the varieties of fish not taken by the McInnes Corporation. We are advised that they are well fed and due to the successful muskrat season, just past, are in good financial condition. There are from 15 to 15 skiffs fishing on Lake Claire and some skiffs are earning upwards of $30.00 per day [memo from J. S. Prescott to R. A. Gibson, 10 June 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

But, Stewart reported a few days later,

> Fishing project at Lake Claire is no[t] going as well as expected, the catch not being very good, however this is not the Indians blame as they are working hard [PAA Stewart 14 June 1948].

The problem was caused by high water. Later in June water levels dropped, and the fish catch improved. However, Stewart claimed that the

> ...Indians are not making much but it does give them something to do and keeps them out of Chipewyan where they only get into trouble. Many are there also who are not fishing but are putting up dry fish [ibid. 24 June 1948].

The operation closed about July 2. McInnes claimed that the catch was too small to justify the fishery. Schlader contended "...that the fault in the Lake Claire area lay with the Indians," who were inexperienced (letter from J. S. Prescott for Fred Fraser, Dist. Agent, to Gibson, 6 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). In a letter to Frank McCall, a park warden, Schlader worte,

> If these fisheries are to be useful to the country, then we have got to broaden the field so that we can select a class of men that would have enough experience to be useful [letter from W. Schlader to Frank A. McColl (sic), 5 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

Stewart and the park officials interpreted the situation differently. Stewart and Warden McCall, who was based at Fort Chipewyan, were pleased at how well the Indians had worked (various entries PAA Stewart 1948; letter form J. S. Prescott for Fred Fraser to Gibson, 6 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). They concluded that

> ...the main trouble was...that they [McInnes] were not catching anything in Lake Athabasca and hence operations were too big for Lake Claire alone [PAA Stewart 2 July 1948; cf. letter form Prescott for Fraser to Gibson, 6 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

The company had been making poor catches on Lake Athabasca, due to high water levels there (letter from Prescott to Fraser, 6 July 1948, PAC

RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). It wanted to send two boats and crews from the lake to the park to increase fish production. Apparently these crews would have fallen under the terms of the licence, which allowed for 25 percent outside labor, but "...the Indian chief objected and his objection was apparently upheld by the Indian Agent -- in spite of the terms of the license" (letter from Victor E. F. Solman to Harrison F. Lewis, 11 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). Stewart elaborated on the particular problem:

> ...I cannot see where McInnes Products had any complaint to make, the boat crews that they wanted to send into the Park were men who were not wanted in any restricted area, two especially and these were the only ones that the Indians had any objection to, we have had enough trouble with these two men poaching on the Chipewyan Reserve No. 201 [memo from J. W. Stewart to IAB, 11 Oct. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

When the company found that it could not send in these additional crews, it closed down the operation (letter from Victor E. F. Solman to Dr. Lewis, 11 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1). McCall concluded that

> It is quite apparent that they [McInnes] are making a case against the Indian fishermen, and not blaming their heavy operating costs as the prime factor in closing the operation [letter from F. A. McCall to J. S. Prescott, 19 July 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

At the end of the fishing season Stewart noted in his journal that while the park administration was

> ...out to help the Indians of the Park and to see that they get a square deal in the fishing industry in the Park....[,] McInnes Products are certainly not a dependable firm to deal with [PAA Stewart 14 July 1948].

Three weeks after the closing of the fishery, McInnes had still not paid the fishermen, which caused both resentment and anxiety among the Natives. The park's evaluation appears to have supported Stewart's opinion:

> ...our difficulty with them [McInnes] so far has been that Mr. Schlader was not very sympathetic to the employment of residents, particularly Indians and half-breeds who lead the Indian life [memo from R. A. Gibson to Meikle, 9 Aug. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1].

Stewart wrote a lengthy memo to Indian Affairs in October in which he evaluated McInnes' methods and suggested guidelines for future operations:

> I have known McInnes Fish Co. for almost 30 years and I know their methods which are not what they might be sometimes.
>
> Should a contract be given again next year I am suggesting that it be even more strict than it was before, that a minimum price be set for Goldeyes and that payment be made to the fishermen every week at the longest and that they be made to give the fishermen a counter slip with all purchases and also for all fish handed in, some (of) the statements of accounts that have come from McInnes are very hard to figure out and prices are not by any means uniform for all articles.
>
> The Indians are very enthusiastic about the fishing program and I am sure that they will do their share but we must have a better check on all accounts...[memo from J. W. Stewart to IAB, 11 Oct. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

He suggested that McInnes should supply all the nets and that a higher price per pound should be paid for goldeye, on the grounds that five cents per pound was "ridiculous" compared to the processed price (ibid.). Stewart was suspicious of McInnes' intentions, and he believed that it was necessary to have "...a very strict contract so that the Indians of that area may get a square deal" (ibid.).

The 1949-1950 Fisheries

Meanwhile, McInnes was negotiating a renewal of its licence for the 1949 season. As one memo explained,

> ...this company are [sic] extremely anxious to have

> another contract for fishing in the Lake Claire area and are attempting to get in the thin edge of the wedge at this time [memo from Fred Fraser to R. A. Gibson, 2 Dec. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

McInnes was willing to pay to have ice put up in the winter in anticipation of the summer fishery; these jobs would go to local people (ibid.). The park administration appears to have taken Stewart's criticisms seriously, because Gibson suggested that if McInnes were to be allowed back in 1949,

> ...the prices for staple articles of food and of equipment supplied by the McInnes Products Corporation to the Indians employed by them on this product be not in excess of trade prices at Fort Chipewyan, Alberta [memo from R. A. Gibson to Fred Fraser, 14 Dec. 1948, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

Schlader had prepared for criticisms by recruiting political support for his operation. He had contacted J. K. Cornwall, who in turn wrote to Gibson in Ottawa:

> Mr. Schlader told me he had given work to the Indians but found them indifferent and inclined to not stay on the job, he impressed me as being fair in his judgment and not prejudiced in any way, but sees difficulty in making the Indians realize the necessity of coming to work regularly. Fish have to be taken care of when brought to the warehouse and he told me he would try to employ as many as he required to work at the warehouse [letter from Cornwall to Gibson, 31 Jan. 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

Gibson replied,

> ...it is evidently Mr. Schlader's intention to employ the local Natives on the least remunerative part of this work. What the department wishes to arrange is for the local people to do the fishing instead of having the commercial fishermen import people from outside for the fishing operations which are, of course, the activities that bring the greatest reward. We think the local people can be encouraged, trained, and equipped to look after the fishing and to a very considerable extent, although this view will be contested by most of the commercial fishermen [letter from R. A. Gibson to Colonel Cornwall, 4 Feb. 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2].

Negotiations for the 1949 fishery licence were still underway in

March, when Stewart suggested to Indian Affairs that while the Indians should be paid for their labor on a weekly basis, the money would actually be turned over to Stewart, who would ration it out "...as needed" (letter from Stewrat to D. M. MacKay, 20 March 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 2). Stewart was trying to control Indian spending so that the people would have more to show for their labor at the end of the season. Similarly, he responded to the proposal that prices at the commissary be set at 33.3 percent over wholesale by suggesting that the commissary ought to be able to sell cheaper than the local business houses (ibid.). The 1949 licence incorporated many of these suggestions.

On June 2, 1949, the McInnes boat appeared unannounced at Fort Chipewyan. Stewart, who was leaving on his annual treaty trip, had only a few hours in which to find fishermen for the company (PAA Stewart 2 June 1949).

The 1949 season involved mainly Native park permittees, as before, as well as one delta fisherman, who was also Native. The company rented out skiffs and outboard motors to the fishermen at $1.50 and $1.00 per day. Each boat was manned by two people, with thirteen boats and twenty-six people in all. It paid five cents per pound for goldeye and three cents per pound for pickerel. As before, other fish caught were wasted, unless they were supplied to the park dogs or dried (report on Claire Lake Fisheries, P. Mandeville, 8 July 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3).

The Indians were dissatisfied with the operation. Stewart discussed the fishery with them as part of the treaty meetings. He

> Made it very plain to the Park Indians that if they did not take advantage of the work in the fishing program, that they would not get the opportunity next year [PAA Stewart 14 June 1949].

He may not have feared that the fishing would be discontinued, but that the park would not continue to insist on Indian labor in the future. On June 15 he noted that he was trying to round up Indians for fishing, but that "...they have a multitude of excuses" (ibid. 15 June 1949). They had worked well in 1948; by 1949 they may have decided that the fishery as run by McInnes did not meet their needs. One reason was their unhappiness about the wasted fish (cf. report on Claire Lake Fisheries, P. Mandeville, 8 July 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3). They requested through Stewart that the fishery be discontinued on the grounds that

> ...the commercial fishing will in a very short time clean out the area. They were very much against it in the first place for this very reason, and they claim that they notice the difference already in the catch [letter from Stewart to IAB, 18 Sept. 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3].

The Indians were also disillusioned about the wage benefits. Stewart noted that by July 18, 30 percent of the quota had been taken, but that "...none of the fishermen are ahead all seem to owe a little" (PAA Stewart 18 July 1949). Philip Mandeville, a park patrolman, reported,

> There are a good many natives in Chipewyan doing nothing that should have been out at the fishery and their Agent told them all to go, but they seem to have no ambition, as some of them had fished last year and did not make any thing [report on Claire Lake Fisheries, P. Mandeville, 8 July 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3].

McInnes was evidently making money not only through the fishing operation, but also through the commissary it operated.[6]

The fishermen might have done somewhat better had they been paid more than five cents per pound, as Stewart had recommended. This suggestion, which Stewart may have made again at the end of the 1949 season, was rejected by park administrator Fred Fraser, who commented,

> We cannot ask the contractor to pay natives more than would be paid whitemen, simply because the native is incompetent.
> ...
>
> The fact that the natives found themselves in debt to the contractor at the end of the season does not convey anything to us here, unless we know what their earnings were, and whether the commissariate prices were fair, and as stipulated in the contract. A native will invariably spend up to his income as it is received, or over if allowed.
>
> Natives seem to resent commercial fishing where or to what extent it is carried on [memo from Fred Fraser to Le Capelain, 19 Oct. 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3].

In other words, Fraser considered Natives to be incompetent, irresponsible, and unreasonable. In this memo, he appeared to resent Stewart's questioning "...our experts' opinions on the poundage of goldeye which can be safely removed from Lake Claire" (ibid.). While the park administration had initially been cautious about the fishery and concerned about protecting the Indians' interests, it now had a commercial interest to defend.

Schlader continued to pressure the government to be allowed to use non-Native fishermen. He wrote to MacKinnon in January, 1950, that

> ...we should be given the opportunity of taking in a few of our well experienced fishermen, rather than be forced to rely on the native fishermen such as we have had to do the past two seasons [letter form W. Schlader to Jas. A. MacKinnon, 10 Jan. 1950, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3].

He succeeded in persuading park officials to grant him permission to employ up to four White fishermen (memo from Fred Fraser to Mr. Nason, 26 Jan. 1950, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3). The licence to fish Lake Claire almost went to tender that year, which might have benefited the local fishermen, but in the end McInnes got it without competition, because the company had already invested a lot of money in the operation (memo from Fred Fraser to Le Capelain, 7 March 1950, PAC RG 85. v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3).

1950 was the last year of the commercial fishery until 1954.[7] According to Barry Potyondi, McInnes gave "...inefficiency and a lack of native interest as the reasons for its decision" (1979:100). Another reason, however, was the drop in the goldeye population (Schlader 1978), contrary to Fraser's angrily asserted faith in his fisheries experts. In fact, the goldeye in the lake were on spawning runs. Harvesting the Lake Claire goldeye greatly depleted the breeding stock and the goldeye populations elsewhere in the region, including Peace River (Kooyman 1973:F3,F15). In 1949, 117,000 pounds of marketable fish were taken, out of a quota of 250,000 for goldeye alone. Only 72,000 pounds were taken the following year (Dept. Resources and Devel. 1950:86; 1951: 92).

Potyondi added that "despite this setback, the government was now aware that the native population could benefit from such a commercial venture" (1979:100). To support this contention he cites gross earnings of $20,000 which went into the local economy (ibid.), although he does not explain whether this figure was for both salaries and royalties or whether it was for one year or all three. In any event, all income earned locally was spent in either the McInnes commissary or in stores in Fort Chipewyan, especially the HBC, so it benefited these companies as much or more than it did the Natives (cf. Elias 1975).

This discussion of the McInnes fishery in the park has suggested instead that Indians did not benefit from this venture, but that government believed that they could, if they would only apply themselves to the work and not squander all their earnings at the commissary. Indians made a serious effort at fishing the first year. They quickly realized that they were going in debt to the company and depleting the fish stocks, including those on which they relied for food. Their enthusiasm waned, although some men did continue to fish.[8]

Later Fisheries 1954-1966

Lake Claire was again opened to commercial fishing in 1954 "...to benefit the local native population," according to Potyondi (1979:103). The operator was Canadian Fish Producers of Winnipeg, which fished in the park for at least a few seasons. According to Schlader, this outfit used its licence for goldeye, which was depleted, to gain access to the pickerel in the park (Schlader 1978; field journals 1977 VI:38). Commercial fishing continued through 1966 (Lothian 1976:64).

Stewart provided little information after the first two seasons on commercial fishing in his journal, though he did report on it for the years 1957, 1958, 1959, and 1960. He said that some work was provided in February for the years 1957 to 1959 for men who put up ice at Hay (Prairie) River for the summer fishery. This work was available at a time was trapping was poor and other employment often not available. In 1960 he commented, "Quite a few of the fishermen have quit, no fish so they are going into debt" (PAA Stewart 6 June 1960). People who wanted to fish had to make a large investment in capital equipment or rent it from the company, and they had to purchase their own supplies. It was a large gamble for local people, especially since catches varied from year to year. However, it seems that there were park Natives still willing to fish commercially, despite the difficulties it entailed, because they needed cash income. Toward the end of this chapter I will indicate the continued Native dissatisfaction at their lack of control over the operation.

Conclusion

There are several lessons to be learned from this discussion of commercial fishing in the park:

1. The entrepreneur was an outside company, McInnes, which wanted to exploit the fish resources in the park because it had depleted fish stocks elsewhere.

2. McInnes tried to justify the proposed operation in terms of benefits to Indians, to northern development, and to the country in general.

3. Wages paid locally were low, and presumably prices in the commissary were high. The Natives commonly went into debt to the company, even when they worked hard.

4. The ultimate beneficiaries of income earned by Natives were the McInnes Company, which ran the commissary, and the stores in Fort Chipewyan, of which the HBC was the largest. Most of this income left the region.

5. The company paid a royalty to the government. The royalty was not reinvested by government in building up fish stocks or conducting related research or other projects of benefit to local people. It also left the region.

6. When Indians complained about the depletion of fish stocks or their lack of financial gain, their complaints were discounted by their employer as a result fo their "incompetence," "irresponsibility," and "ignorance."

7. Despite the obligation of the company to train the Natives in the fishery operation, the company tried and was eventually successful in getting permission to use non-native labor which, it claimed, was more productive.

8. The park administration became committed to the success of the fishery.

Commercial fishing in the park shows the conflicts of interest and the dilemma of northern development. The company was eager to agree and even propose conditions that would allow it access to a previously restricted region and resource. It then tried to get around these agreed conditions or to have them altered to increase profits. Most of the related income and all the profits left the region, going to outside owners of the companies involved. This income included that of the commissary run by the company as well as the local stores. At the end of the project, the resource was depleted, and in this operation, much of it was wasted.

It is not surprising that the Natives were unhappy with the overall outcome of the fishery, even when they were compelled by their poverty and the urging of the powerful Indian Agent to seek fishing jobs. Indians received only small and short term cash benefits. These were outweighed by the long term underdevelopment indicated by the degradation of the resource and the outflow of income. It was outside industries which received the long term benefits of the fishery. This pattern would be repeated in the commercial logging enterprises which were initiated a few years after the beginning of commercial fishing.

COMMERCIAL LUMBERING IN THE PARK

First Efforts

It was Jack Stewart, not an entreprenuer, who first wanted to log in the park in the 1940s. He wanted to produce lumber for Indian housing. Because he believed that "...for an Indian to be issued something for nothing is not at all to his good," he wanted permission to saw in the park, using Indian labor and supervision by park staff (letter from J. W. Stewart to A. H. Gibson, 4 Sept. 1946, PAC RG 85 v. 1005 file 16864). Gibson liked the plan (letter from A. H. Gibson to Stewart, 14 Sept. 1946; memo from A. H. Gibson to R. A. Gibson, 16 Sept. 1946; both in PAC RG 85 v. 1005 file 16864). However, nothing came of the application. Even when the first commercial venture was begun five years later, Indian Affairs was unable to obtain lumber from it for the local housing program.

Alberta was also interested in northern timber resources because of the increased lumber production during the war and continued high demand afterwards (cf. Dept. Lands and Mines 1941:9; 1943:9; Card 1963: 93). In 1949, Alberta began a survey to determine the location and quality of stands of timber, and it was to include the Alberta portion of Wood Buffalo Park in the survey. That same year, the federal Forestry Branch surveyed the timber resources of the Mackenzie Basin and Wood Buffalo Park (memo from Fred Fraser to Le Capelain, 26 Oct. 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A; Lothian 1976:64; Potyondi 1979:100).[9] Park staff recommended that the surveys of the park forests be continued in 1950. It was found that nearly two billion board feet of spruce timber was located along the major river courses in the park (memo from Fred Fraser to Le Capelain, 26 Oct. 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1214 file 400-2-3 pt. 3A). This distribution is illustrated in figure 10. Park staff concluded,

> The commercial timber on the Slave River is limited in extent, and there can be no doubt that, if Pine Point and other prospective mining properties go ahead, the demand for timber products will lead to the utilization of the resources in the Park area.
>
> Mr. Holman also recommended that cutting of mature timber in the stands on the Peace be planned in the immediate future [ibid.].

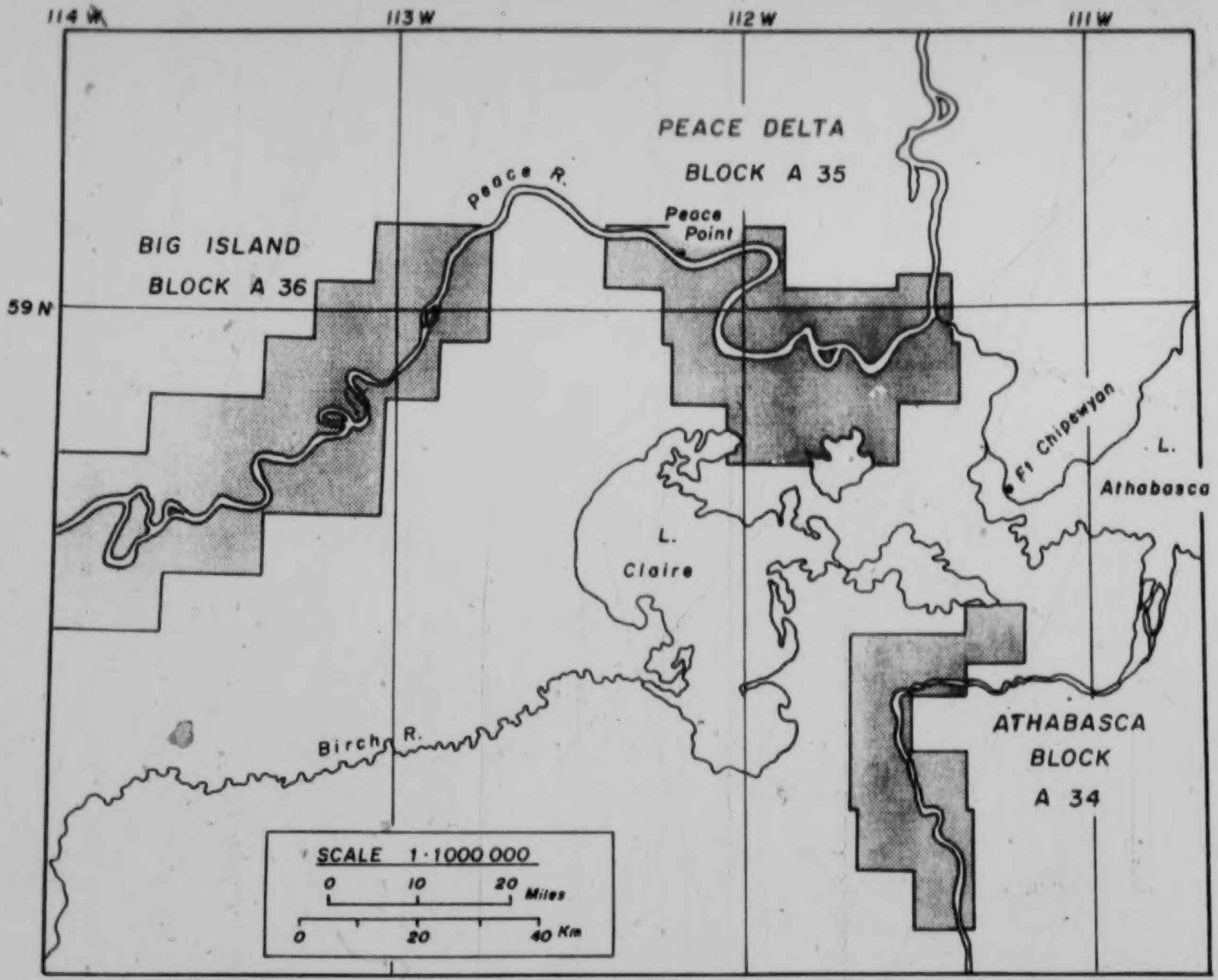
114 W
113 W
112 W
111 W
59 N
PEACE DELTA
BLOCK A 35
Peace R.
Peace Point
BIG ISLAND
BLOCK A 36
Ft Chipewyan
L.
Athabasca
L.
Claire
Birch R.
ATHABASCA
BLOCK
A 34
SCALE 1·1000 000
0
10
20 Miles
0
20
40 Km

Figure 10

Forest Management

Areas, Wood Buffalo

Park, 1958

[Adapted from
Potyondi 1979:101]

So, while a small-scale, non-profit logging project on behalf of the local bands by Indian Affairs was denied, three years later the park administration contemplated a major shift in park philosophy regarding logging.

Eldorado Mining and Peace River Sawmill

The immediate push for a logging operation in the park came from the development of the uranium industry, which was searching for and producing radioactive materials to be used by the U.S. Eldorado Mining and Refining Limited, a Crown corporation created when Eldorado Gold Mining was nationalized in 1942 as part of the war effort (cf. W. D. G. Hunter 1962), was the sole buying and marketing agent for uranium for the government, and it was involved as well in its own program of exploration. In 1947 it found uranium ore around Goldfields, toward the east end of Lake Athabasca. By April 1951, enough ore had been found to justify a mining operation of 500 tons per day. Production was to begin in April, 1953 (ibid.:330,332,339-340). Building the mine and the townsite, Uranium City, required a large amount of lumber. It was decided that it was "in the national interest" for Eldorado to have access to nearly timber stands of Wood Buffalo Park (cf. Potyondi 1979:102). One consideration may have been that Northern Transportation Company Limited (NTCL), a subsidiary of Eldorado, was available to transport the timber by barge at little additional cost to the company, since it already supplied Fort Chipewyan.

The result was the Peace River Sawmill, located near the mouth of the Peace River about 1950 (Foster 1978).[10] The mill began producing lumber in 1951. Production may have varied from about two million board feet measure (bfm) (Potyondi 1979:102) to five million bfm (Foster 1978).

Allan Wahlstrom of Swanson Lumber recalls that the amount cut was relatively small (1978). It was a small operation because the lumber was not marketed commercially, but was produced for operations of Eldorado Mining and NTCL. Lumber was shipped on NTCL's barges to Uranium City and the Fort Rea property that Eldorado owned on Great Slave Lake. It was also used by NTCL at its various posts along the river. No lumber was sold to Indian Affairs or to private buyers (Foster 1978), although by this date the housing program in the Fort Chipewyan region had begun.

The operation at Peace River Sawmill had a winter logging and sawing season and a summer planing and shipping season (Foster 1978). Eldorado built a landing strip for its DC-3 nearby, without government approval (Potyondi 1979:102), to service the mill and to bring in supplies for the winter camp. The strip was later used by Swanson Lumber Company to service its Camp 3 operation (Foster 1978).

Unlike the McInnes fishery agreement, Eldorado's contract with the government to log and mill park timber did not require the company to use Native labor. However, Stu Foster recalls that most of the employees were Natives from Fort Chipewyan, except for a few skilled tradesmen such as the sawyer. Native employees were not employees of Eldorado, which might have entitled them to some company benefits, but rather they were employed by Ray Walters, the man who was contracted by Eldorado to run the mill. There is no information available on wage rates, but it was not a union project. Local workers received some on-the-job training, which undoubtedly was useful to them when Swanson Lumber entered the park. A bunkhouse and cook shack were provided for workers, but apparently the Native employees who brought their families there for the winter employment season lived in their own tents. There was also a small commissary, but no major facilities related to the development of a town-site.

The poor trapping forced many Indians to look for work at the mill, according to Stewart (PAA Stewart 30 July 1951). While initially "...the labour demand there is limited" (ibid.), by June 28, 1952, and again in 1953, Stewart reported that he paid treaty to "quite a few members of the Cree Band..." at the sawmill (ibid. 28 June 1952; 3 July 1953). Some Indians came from the Fort Vermilion Agency to work there as well (ibid. 23 July 1952; field journal 1977 V:16), and some of them stayed on to work for Swanson Lumber, eventually becoming permanent residents of the Fort Chipewyan region. If they were already park residents, as many seem to have been, their integration into the Fort Chipewyan community would have been assured by their ties of kinship and residence with the Crees located at the lower end of the Peace River.

Stewart was concerned about what happened to the incomes the Indians received from their labor at the mill:

> We have had many complaints of irregularities in pay checks. Mill manager claims they spend their money in the store run by the mill as fast as they make it, however I persuaded him to issue them with copies of the counter-slips, so they would have an idea of the amount they were spending from time to time [PAA Stewart 23 July 1952].

As at the McInnes fishery, the wages paid to Native employees were plowed right back into the company which hired them.

Even these temporary benefits might have ended one winter, when Eldorado turned the operation over to its subsidiary NTCL to operate, because there was no obligation to use Native labor at the mill, to provide the boat crews with employment during the winter season. The plan did not work out, however, and NTCL returned the mill to Eldorado (Foster 1978).

While a letter from R. Walter contended that the Peace River Sawmill was "a very good and successful operation" (letter to John Turner, Min. of Justice, from R. Walter, WBP Timber Company, 18 March 1971,WBNP file 71/5), there were problems with abuses of regulations. Foster suggests that problems resulted from the company's need for so much large timber; they occasionally topped off trees too high for regulations (Foster 1978). Potyondi describes what he terms "...flagrant abuses of privilege...": "...the Company overcut on its permits and then provided the government with less than satisfactory explanations of its conduct"; it built the aircraft landing strip without permission; it disposed of its sawdust by bulldozing it into the river (1979:102). One reason for these abuses may have been that the park warden and staff were not trained to oversee a logging and milling operation and could not provide adequate supervision. According to Foster, the park staff were more concerned that workers at the mill obey the park regulations relating to hunting and trapping and about the prevention of fires (1978).

The mill remained in operation until 1958, when Eldorado decided that it would be cheaper to contract out for its lumber to the newly established Swanson Lumber Company than to run its own mill (Wahlstrom 1978). The benefits of this first logging operation for the residents of the Fort Chipewyan region were some wages and training. To the extent that the local workers spent their earnings in the stores at Fort Chipewyan rather than in the company commissary, there was increased cash flow in the town. As well, people receiving wages did not need assistance from Indian Affairs. The mill also provided cheap lumber for Eldorado and NTCL, thereby increasing the profitability of their mining and shipping operations.

On the negative side, the logging by this mill used up most of the marketable timber in timber berth no. 253 (memo from ? to F. J. G. Cunningham, 8 July 1967, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). Also, the existence of the mill and the employment it provided local people became the motive for allowing more commercial logging and milling in the park, which itself opened the door to larger lumber operators.

New Logging Ventures

In 1955 and 1956, with the demand for lumber still high (Card 1963:93), the federal government auctioned off four timber berths in the Peace Delta and Big Island blocks (fig.10) (Lothian 1976:64). Timber berth no. 367 went on August 24, 1955, to Swanson Lumber Company (Wahlstrom 1978; Agreement 15 June 1961 bet. the Queen and Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd., WBNP file 71/5 T4.2), known locally as "Swanson's."[11] Swanson's was to become the most important operator in the park, eventually absorbing all its competitors. Like McInnes in fishing, Swanson's wanted access to the park trees because it had depleted timber stands in the Lesser Slave Lake area. It needed new sources of white spruce, which it sold in Canada and in the U.S. (Wahlstrom 1978). The growth of this company in Alberta was part of a process of smaller operators giving way to larger and fewer ones (Card 1963:93; cf. Elias 1975:9-11).

Timber berth no. 408 was granted to the Denney Logging Company of California on Sept. 7, 1956 (Wahlstrom 1978). Timber berth no. 378 was granted to Gordon Fuller of California on November 25, 1956 (memo from the Director, Northern Admin. Branch, to Acting Dep. Min. DIAND, 3 June 1964, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5). Timber berth no. 396 may have been granted at this time as well, but the identity of the licencee is not clear from the records available (cf. letter from R. A. Hodgkinson to

D. B. Coombs, 30 Jan. 1967, WBNP file 71/5; Potyondi 1979:102). In 1961, the Wood Buffalo Park Timber Company Ltd. received timber berth no. 503M, located on the west bank of the Athabasca River in the Athabasca block (letter from R. Walter to John Turner, 18 March 1971, WBNP file 71/5).

Potyondi believes that these timber berths were made available to employ Natives (1979:103). Stewart thought that the sawmill operations would help the local population, because wage labor in the mill could be an alternative to trapping, as well as a way of making more fur available to older men: he advised the younger men "...to apply for work at the two sawmills in the area" (PAA Stewart 28 Dec. 1955). Judging from the absence of clauses in the contracts which would have forced the companies to hire and trail local Native employees, there may have been other motives. One of these may have been interest by park staff in "managing" its timber by having the "over-mature" stands of white spruce, some of which were over 200 years old, cut out (Wahlstrom 1978).

Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd.[12]

Swanson's negotiated its contracts with the federal government in Ottawa. The amount of local input from either Indian Affairs or the local park administration is unknown. According to Wahlstrom, the company was not required to reforest, nor did it have to pay high royalties or rents. Royalties, or timber dues, were based on sales of lumber, not the actual amount of wood cut. The company was granted a generous cull factor of twenty percent, based on the gross footage less twenty percent for wastage. Wahlstrom considers this figure to have been reasonable, because the timber was so mature, although later park correspondence suggests that this figure may have been too high (Wahlstrom 1978; memo from D. B. Coombs to M. R. T. Glanagan, 29 Aug. 1967, WBNP file 71/5). The company signed another contract in 1959, as did all the other companies, when Order-in-Council P.C. 1959-265 "...cancelled all previous agreements for timber berths in Wood Buffalo Park in order to create new agreements which would have identical terms" (memo from the Director, N. Admin. Branch, to Acting Dep. Min. DIAND, 3 June 1964, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5).

Wahlstrom described how Swanson's began its operations in the park:

> We first started in there in 1955, and we built a mill at a place we called Camp 3. ... In 1957 the Company decided to build a second mill approximately 5 miles west of Camp 3, at a place called Sweetgrass Landing. Then, in the spring of 1958, [when] the mill at Sweetgrass had still not been completed, we were hit with a very severe flood at Camp 3. And it was so severe that we decided at that time just to clean up that site and abandon it, because the water was about 10 feet deep at Camp 3, and only about 5 feet deep at Sweetgrass, which we at that time called Camp 6 [1978].

The Sweetgrass Landing operation was to become extremely important in the lives of Natives living in the Fort Chipewyan region, particularly thsoe in the park.

In 1958, Swanson's obtained the Eldorado lumber contract, although it did not take over the Peace River Sawmill, which was simply shut down (Wahlstrom 1978). Swanson's got Courrier Flights Limited, an airline in which it was a minority shareholder, to begin flights to Fort Chipewyan and Sweetgrass Landing to deliver mail. Most of the airline's revenue was derived from hauling freight to the mill site in the park (ibid.). Courrier constructed a small air strip in Fort Chipewyan, which was used until the mid 1960s, when the Department of Transport built an airport there.

Swanson's was again responsible for road construction to supply its mill with both supplies and labor. Beginning about 1957, after completion of the highway link to Fort Smith and some of the internal park railways, the company began hauling groceries during the winter season to Sweetgrass Landing (Wahlstrom 1978). It was also responsible for constructing an ice road from Sweetgrass Landing to Fort Chipewyan, beginning about 1960, to facilitate worker travel between the two communities. The ice road was extended to Uranium City, though not by the company (Pinnell 1978; Wahlstrom 1978). Stewart noted the arrival of two trucks from Edmonton with freight in February, 1960. He commented that "The country is opening up when trucks can get in here from Edmonton" (PAA Stewart 9 Feb. 1960; cf. also 8 Feb. 1960).

The lumber operation at Sweetgrass Landing was similar to the one at Peace River Sawmill. It had winter and summer seasons. Logging and sawing were done in the winter, while sawing, planing, and shipping were done in the summer. The mill closed for a month at freeze-up and another month at break-up, when maintenance on its equipment was done. Swanson's shipped some lumber and supplied its camp using NTCl barges. Only construction, standard, and utility grades of lumber were shipped out, because there was no market in the south for economy grade. Barges took the lumber to Fort McMurray, where it was loaded on rail cars for transport south (Wahlstrom 1978; memo from D. B. Coombs to M. R. T. Flanagan, 29 Aug. 1967, WBNP file 71/5).

Swanson's was not required to hire workers locally. Pinnell recalled that the first year the mill was in operation, a large number of workers were brought in from Edmonton, but many were unsatisfactory

(1978). It was also difficult logistically to bring in people from outside. Therefore, the company tried to reduce the number of southern workers at the mill, aiming initially at a ratio of 50:50 between them and outside workers (Pinnell 1978; Wahlstrom 1978).

To encourage workers for what was a permanent, year-round industry, Swanson's established a town siteat Sweetgrass Landing. The company built houses for its employees. It ran a store which was later taken over by the HBC. It arranged for a school, a post office, and some recreation, such as Sunday night bingos. The Roman Catholic diocese built a church. These facilities were present by about 1960 (field journals; Wahlstrom 1978).

Swanson's also trained local people to take on many of the skilled and better paying jobs at the mill. It put people on apprenticeship programs, especially in the garage. Millwrights and loggers were trained, using on-the-job training for all trades (Pinnell 1978). By 1967, Natives occupied the following positions: assistant logging foreman, all five cat drivers, three out of four log truck drivers, both gang sawyers, one headrig sawyer, three out of four edgermen, both life truck drivers (letter from A. J. Hamilton, Swanson's, to J. R. E. Coleman, Director, National Parks Branch, 5 May 1967, WBNP file 71/5).

These efforts paid off for both the company and the workers. A. J. Hamilton informed the Parks Branch in 1967 that

> ...out of a total staff of 83 at Sweetgrass, 70 were Indians or Metis. It is also notable that these men are more and more filling key production positions. ...
>
> Our experience with the natives has not all been good, and we still have our share of problems, with some of them, but over the years we have built up a crew of competent and reliable Indians and Metis who have integrated well with the balance of our staff [letter from Hamilton to Coleman, 5 May 1967, WBNP file 71/5].

Approximately 35 percent of the employees were from Fort Chipewyan, and 35 percent from Fort Vermilion and Fort Smith, with a total of about 200 people living at the mill site (memo from D. B. Coombs to M. R. T. Flanagan, 29 Aug. 1967, WBNP file 71/5). By 1968-70, 60-65 percent were from Fort Chipewyan, with 15-25 percent from other local communities (telecon from Supt. WBNP to Reg. Dir. Nat. and Historic Parks Branch, 6 April 1970, WBNP file 71/5). These were workers who had become sophisticated in the running of a large mill operation. For many of them, sawmill work replaced trapping as their occupation, and they were steady workers. Others seem to have been more casual about their employment, working for a few months and then leaving. These seem to have been men filing laborer jobs rather than skilled tradesmen. Most men in Fort Chipewyan and the park worked at the mill at intervals, if not regularly (field journals).

Wages were good. These workers were members of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), which was certified at Sweetgrass Landing in 1959. The union negotiated wages and conditions with the company at another job site, and the agreement covered workers at Sweetgrass Landing. No special conditions were negotiated for the north (Pinnell 1978; cf. Card 1963:99). Table 9 shows the wage scale for 1966 and 1967 as outlined in the collective agreement between Swanson's and IWA (WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). Fallers were paid on a piecework basis. By 1967, they earned $0.25 per tree and cut up to 150 trees daily. Because most fallers averaged 125 trees per day, the average daily income would have been $31 (memo from Coombs to Flanagan, 29 Aug. 1967, WBNP file 71/5). Total payroll was about $15,000 every two weeks, for a 40 week period, for a grand total of $300,000 annually (ibid.; memo from Alex J. Reeve,

Table 9

Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd. Wage Scale, 1966 and 1967

Operation	Effective 1 September 1966	Effective 1 September 1967
Planer Operation		
Lumber Handler (common labor)	$ 1.70	$ 1.85
Resaw Tailer	1.70	1.85
Drychain Puller	1.70	1.85
Resaw Feeder	1.71	1.86
Breakdown Man	1.74	1.89
Trimmerman	1.74	1.89
Tallyman	1.75	1.90
Planer Feeder	1.80	1.95
Grader - with permit	1.80	1.95
Driver 2nd Class	1.85	2.00
Trimmerman with grading certificate	1.85	2.00
Grader with certificate	2.05	2.20
Driver 1st Class	1.95	2.10
Assitant Planerman Filer	2.17	2.32
Planerman Filer	2.35	2.50
Sawmill Operation		
Lumber Handler (common labor)	1.70	1.85
Greenchain Puller	1.70	1.85
Strip - piler	1.70	1.85
Log Tallyman	1.75	1.90
Sorter Feeder	1.75	1.90
Driver 2nd Class	1.85	2.00
Driver 1st Class	1.95	2.10
Gang Saw Filer	2.00	2.15
Gang Sawyer	2.40	2.55
Automatic Headrig Sawyer	2.40	2.55
Logging Operation		
Common Labor	1.70	1.85
Cat Chokerman	1.70	1.85
Truck Chokerman	1.70	1.85
Truck Driver 2nd Class	1.85	2.00
Cat Operator 2nd Class	1.85	2.00
Truck Driver 1st Class	1.95	2.10
Cat Operator 1st Class	1.95	2.10
Cat Operator Roadwork	2.05	2.20

Operation	Effective 1 September 1966	Effective 1 September 1967
Garage and Camp Operation		
Common Labor	$ 1.70	$ 1.85
Watchman	1.70	1.85
Handyman	1.85	2.00
Serviceman	1.85	2.00
Mechanic 2nd Class	2.10	2.25
Electrician	2.15	2.30
Mechanic 1st Class	2.40	2.55
Welder	2.4 2.40	2.55
Mechanic - licenced	2.65	2.80
Welder - licenced	2.75	2.90
Cookhouse and Camp Operations		
Flunkies	1.45	1.60
Bullcook	1.70	1.85
Night Cook	1.73	1.88
Cook - 60 men or over	1.95	2.10
36-59 men	1.85	2.00
0-35 men	1.75	1.90

Note: Employees who have not completed a full season with the Company will be paid 10¢ per hour less than the set rate in the schedule. If they complete the season with the Company they shall be paid the full rate in the schedule retroactive to the first day of employment.

(Supplement No. 2 referred to in the Collective Agreement between Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd. (Camp 6) and International Woodworkers of America, Local 1-207, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2)

4 Aug. 1966, WBNP file 71/5).

Both Pinnell and Wahlstrom claim that Swanson's operation was marginal for many years, because of the distances involved. The company negotiated a new, more favorable contract on June 15, 1961. It was to last for the decade (Jan. 1, 1961, to July 31, 1970), with the first four years considered a "development period" (memo from the Director, N. Admin. Branch, to Acting Dep. Min. DIAND, 3 June 1964, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5). Despite the concessions in timber dues, in 1963 a letter from Swanson Lumber to the government claimed a new loss of about $5,000 for what was "...by far our best year at this operation" (letter from A. J. Hamilton to C. T. W. Hyslop, Chief, Resources Division, DIAND, 25 Feb. 1963, WBNP file 71/5). To counter these problems, Pinnell and some other men became actively involved in directing and reorganizing the company's operations in the early 1960s (Pinnell 1978; Wahlstrom 1978). By 1967, Hamilton explained to the government:

> Our operations in Wood Buffalo Park have been a losing proposition right from the out set. At the present moment, we consider there is no chance for us recouping past losses but we believe we are now at a position where we are covering direct operating costs and making some contribution to overhead [letter from A. J. Hamilton to J. R. E. Coleman, DIAND, 5 May 1967, WBNP file 71/5].

The company was able to take over properties held by Denney Logging and by Primrose when those companies closed in the 1960s. Swanson's was purchased by a U.S. corporation in 1969 (Pinnell 1978; Wahlstrom 1978).

Denney Logging Company

The Denney Logging Company moved into the park the year after Swanson's. The government accepted its bid because the company planned to set up its sawmill and eventually a plywood plant just upriver from Fort Fitzgerald, at Scow Island, with Fort Smith as the company's base.

However, the company's timber berth no. 408 was located way up the Peace River. The company planned to float the logs down river to the mill. In 1957, Fuller's timber berth no. 378, close to the mill site, was assigned to Denney, perhaps to help the company deal with this logistical problem.

In 1957-58, although U.S. owned, Denney financed its operation with $500,000 in loans from the Canadian Industrial Development Bank. Another quarter of a million dollars had been invested by a Californian financier. In 1960, ownership changed, and so did the company name, to Northern Forest Products Ltd. (memo from the Director, N. Admin. Branch, to Acting Dep. Min., DIAND, 3 June 1964, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5; Agreement bet. the Queen and Industrial Devel. Bank, 23 April 1965, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2).

The operation was in trouble right from the beginning as a result of what Wahlstrom called its "...poor concept, poor idea" (1978). There were two major problems: first, the company's timber was too far from the mill to be moved to it easily by water. As a result, little lumber was sawed at the mill. Secondly, the mill was too big for the region. Even Stewart commented about Denney's troubles in his journal:

> I think the biggest trouble is the mill is too big and is more of a west coast mill and it is definitely too far from the source of timber [PAA Stewart 17 March 1960].

The company was unable to meet its payroll, due to its financial difficulties and its practice of withholding payment until the end of the season:

> Unfortunately, there are employers in this particular industry who do not effect payment of their workmen's earnings each pay day or in a maximum period of one month. The general practice in the industry is for the employees to obtain partial payment of their earnings and their outstanding earnings are most usually payable

> at the conclusion of the winter operations and it may be appreciated that where an employer is unable to effect payment of all the employees' earnings, the employees are quite often victimized [letter from W. Maday, Chief Inspector, Board of Industrial Relations, Govt. of Alta., to Min. of DIAND, 21 Oct. 1963, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5].

A company named Western Management acquired control of Northern Forest Products Ltd. in December 1961. It tried to obtain more financial support, and it may have tried to sell out to Swanson's (memo from the Director, N. Admin. Branch, to Acting Dep. Min. DIAND, 3 June 1964, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5). Between April and May, 1963, the government served notice on Northern Forest Products at Fort Smith to pay its back timber dues and rents owing to the Crown for timber berths nos. 408 and 378. The company went bankrupt (letter from Maday to Min. of DIAND, 21 Oct. 1963, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5).

The Industrial Development Bank paid the fees to the Crown in 1963 so that the timber berths would not be declared null and void for non-payment of fees. The Bank was subsequently granted permission to harvest timber on berth no. 378 (Agreement bet. the Queen and IDB, 23 April 1965, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2; memo from the Director to Acting Dep. Min. DIAND, 3 June 1964, WBNP file 71/5 T4.5). The Bank then negotiated an agreement with Swanson's, and on September 7, 1965, timber berth no. 378 was assigned to the company (Agreement bet. IDB as assignor and Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd. as assignee, 7 Sept. 1965, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). The park administration suggested that Swanson's might want to establish a mill at Scow Island, but the company refused (letter from A. J. Hamilton to J. R. E. Coleman, 5 May 1967, WBNP file 71/5).

Wood Buffalo Park Timber Co. Ltd. and Primrose Forest Products Limited

Timber berth no. 503M has a different history from the others in the park. It was located on the west bank of the Embarras River, in the Athabasca block. It was originally assigned to Wood Buffalo Park Timber Company in 1961. This company entered into a contract with Canadian Conifer Ltd., an Edmonton-based company. Canadian Conifer was to put up the capital and purchase the lumber. However, relations were not good between the two companies; the present of WBP Timber Company claimed that Canadian Conifer wanted to control the timber completely (letter from R. Walter to John Turner, Min. of Justice, 18 March 1971, WBNP file 71/5). Canadian Conifer, in financial difficulties, tried to acquire further cutting rights in the park. This request was refused by J. Arthur Laing, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, on the grounds that the new national parks policy meant that "...it would not be justifiable to enter into new commitments for the exploitation of Park resources" (letter from Laing to Roy A. Philion _et al_., Edm., on behalf of Canadian Conifer Ltd., 2 Oct. 1964, WBNP file 71/5). Laing wanted to see the park developed "...so that the Wood Buffalo Park will not be regarded solely as a buffalo range..." (_ibid_.). He suggested that those portions of the park suitable for development be considered for excision: the land would be removed from the park and turned over to the province (_ibid_.).

It is not clear what role this refusal of additional timber rights to Canadian Conifer played in the company's failure. In any event, it was liquidated in 1965. Its mill was sold for a fraction of its value, and in 1966 the timber rights were sold to Swanson Lumber. Swanson's then traded the timber to Nelson Lumber Co., which set up Primrose Forest Products Limited. Primrose went bankrupt after one year, and the timber and other assets were bought again by Swanson's. But, because Swanson's did not then log the timber berth, the berth was cancelled (letter from R. Walter to John Turner, 18 March 1971; agreement bet. WBP Timber Co. Ltd. as assignor and Swanson Lumber Co., Ltd. as assignee, 15 Nov. 1965; agreement bet. Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd. as assignor and Primrose Forest Products Ltd. as assignee, 14 July 1966; letter from R. A. Hodgkinson to A. R. Collins, Collins and Braul, Edm., 6 Sept. 1966; all in WBNP file 71/5). It is not clear whether or not timber berth no. 503M was logged in the 1960s.

Swanson's tried to get the timber berth reinstated in 1969. It claimed that logging would benefit the forest and create another 40 jobs (proposals for discussion with DIAND, Nov. 1969, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). While this request was refused, the possibility was not forgotten. In a few years the government would raise the matter again.

Economic Impact of Logging

By the mid 1960s, Swanson Lumber was the sole operator in the park. Its main mill was at Sweetgrass Landing, and it had another mill at Fifth Meridian. Its operations in the park were part of a larger enterprise which had mills at High Level and Fort McMurray. Company officials maintain that a once-marginal operation had finally become a profitable one, due to reorganization of production and, perhaps, access to additional timber stands, which meant that the company could plan for continued operations over a long time.

The company paid timber dues, ground rents, and fire-fighting fees to the government. The costs to the government for services rendered directly or indirectly to the company are not known. These fees and royalties left the region. They were not set aside as part of a special fund for the development of the renewable resources of the park.

The company paid wages to its workers. A letter written in

1967 stated that the company had paid out about three million dollars in wages since it began the Sweetgrass mill, with about 75 percent of this total - approximately two and a quarter million dollars - going to Indians and other northern Natives (letter from A. J. Hamilton to J. R. E. Coleman, 5 May 1967, WBNP file 71/5). The letter cited above indicates that yearly wages by this date were between $250,000 and $300,000.[13]

Although many outsiders who worked at the mill had their pay cheques deposited in a bank account in the south, most local workers spent their earnings in the local stores, especially the HBC. The company approved levels of credit with the HBC on behalf of its employees; the store would then deduct the amounts purchased from the pay cheques. The company also brought in cash for those employees who wanted to take some money with them to Fort Chipewyan, although Wahlstrom recalls that there was little cash around, even in the late 1960s (1978). The lumber industry benefited the HBC, which began again to extend credit, at least to Natives who were mill employees.

In other words, the logging and lumber operation produced income primarily for Swanson Lumber, the HBC, and the government (rents and royalties). The income left the region and may have been invested in operations elsewhere. Natives received only the short term benefits of wages. No money was retained for the band fund. The major long term benefit to Natives was the on-the-job training which they received. While many of these jobs were related specifically to the trades required in the logging and milling processes, some jobs, such as mechanics and heavy equipment operation, were useful in a variety of industries.

Social Impacts of Logging

The creation of a Native labor force was a singular transformation of Native lifestyle. Prior to the Sweetgrass Landing operation, the Native residents of the park had never lived permanently in any settlement with large numbers of non-Natives, nor with large numbers of Natives not defined as close kin. Their children had usually lived in the mission residence when they attended school. Now, for the first time, large numbers of Indians and Métis from bush settlements were leaving their traditional communities for homes and jobs at Sweetgrass Logging. They were joined by some Métis from Fort Chipewyan. Workers brought their families, and all lived together in the same locality in the park. Children lived at home and attended the day school.

Sweetgrass Landing and Fort Chipewyan were linked as communities. It was relatively easy travel between the two, by boat in summer and by road in winter, and people moved readily between them to look for work, to visit relatives and friends, and to conduct business. Significantly, it was Indians and Métis from the park, rather than Chipewyans from the reserve - who rarely if ever worked at Swanson's - who were the first Natives from bush settlements to relocate to Fort Chipewyan. The experiences and opportunities at Sweetgrass Landing appear to have accustomed park Natives to wage labor and to town life (cf. field journals 1977; 1978). Card suggests similarly that employment in the Lesser Slave Lake forestry industry served as "...an initiation into the demands of industrialized society" for Natives in that region (1963:102). Town life became acceptable and even desirable as a result for many park Natives.

One reason for the ease with which this change was made was that the work schedule at Swanson's fit in well with trapping and the seasonal economic needs of the people. Men and the few women who worked as cooks had employment throughout the winter season. This work was important because winter trapping paid very little at this time, and trappers could obtain little credit. The steady wage provided by the company was important. However, the workers still lived on or near their traditional territories. They could take off a month during break-up to hunt muskrats, which were still important in the fur trade, as well as an event important in the annual cycle of activity. They could also take time in the fall to hunt during freeze-up. Finally, they could find employment during the summer months, the period when trappers often sought out wage labor (field journals 1977; 1978; Pinnell 1978; Wahlstrom 1978).

Another factor was that the company treated the Native workers well, to such an extent that the company itself became another patron. As Pinnell explained,

> You see, our people were everything to those workers. Our manager was the doctor, the midwife, the referee in marital quarrels. They'd call him up in the middle of the night if a child was sick, or if their stove went out, almost everything [1978].

The company would call for nurses from Fort Chipewyan when necessary, and its top people all had first aid training (*ibid.*). It would also provide gas and oil occasionally for people to go to Fort Chipewyan to see the nurse (field journal 1977 I:23).

This compatibility between mill labor and traditional lifestyle combined with the opportunities to remain in or near traditional land use areas and to live in a community of family and friends. Even workers who spoke little or no English could be employed, because there was always someone working nearby who could translate (field journals). For the first time in approximately 100 years, there was a serious alternative to a trapping lifestyle, at a time when that lifestyle had become very difficult to maintain.

Reliance on the Sawmill: New Problems, Old Problems

Although many local people abandoned their previous cycle of trapping and hunting in favor of wage labor, the lumber industry did not offer a long term solution to the region's economic difficulties. The reasons were both ecological and political.

The white spruce stands were not really a "renewable resource." They were being depleted. One government official described the lumber operation as "'cut and get out,'" adding that it did "...not serve as a basis for a stable community" (memo from W. McKim to Supt. WBP, 14 May 1970, WBNP file 71/5).

Neither Swanson's nor the other companies were required to reforest areas which they had logged. The correspondence between company officials and government officials expresses differing views regarding the value of this policy. Not surprisingly, the company believed that natural regeneration was adequate:

> There was some fantastic natural regeneration there. Spruce was coming back, probably better than if they had replanted it. ... [N]ature picked the season when trees could and did survive. I think it was the right method [Pinnell 1978].

This view was supported by at least one senior civil servant, who informed an interested citizen that

> Studies made a number of years ago indicate that the cut-over lands are genenerating satisfactorily to a mixture of spruce, poplar, birch and a variety of shrubs. While, for commercial forests, a higher proportion of spruce would probably be desirable, the current mixture is not unsatisfactory for Park lands [letter from J. H. Gordon to Peter G. Kevan, 28 Jan. 1971, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2].

At least some park officials, however, were unhappy about what they saw as the growth of mixtures of species different from those which had characterized the climax stands. For the most part, said one warden, it was the very old, mature stands, over 150 years old, of white spruce and occasionally black poplar which were logged. Without reforestation, these areas tended to revert to fir and to become wetter (field journal 1978 VII:27-28).[14] Others claimed that not even this type of regeneration was occurring. As one official wrote,

> In a previous memo, the question of regeneration on logged areas was raised. The Regional Forester found little evidence of regeneration in logged areas -- especially in the better growing sites near the river. If we wish these brushy areas to regenerate, we will have to consider prescribed burning and planting or some other type of silvicultural treatment [memo from R. P. Malis to M. D. Learmouth, 25 Sept. 1970, WBNP file 71/5].

In either case, growth is so slow in the north that it would have taken many years for trees to become sizeable enough to harvest. That meant that a sustained yield was probably not possible within the park. Swanson's needed access to new timber berths for its operation to continue. Ultimately, it would have had to leave the park due to lack of timber, as it had left the Lesser Slave Lake area in the 1950s (cf. memo from McKim to Supt. WBP, 12 May 1970, WBNP file 71/5). Fort Chipewyan residents would face the same problem when they decided that they wanted to open their own sawmill. After seventeen years of logging in timber berths nos. 367 and 296, the forests were "depleted":

> ...the best timber has been removed and the remaining timber is not good, mature, and plentiful enough to permit further successful operations [letter from ? to B. F. Osborne, Sec., Ft. Chip. Emerg. Action Committee, 2 May 1972?, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2].

The second difficulty regarding local reliance on the logging industry is more complicated: the lack of local control over the operation. On the "macro" level, the problem was that the lumber business was vulnerable to and dependent upon the market demand for the resource it produced. It was precisely this dependency which had led to the economic difficulties which caused suffering among the local residents when the fur trade declined after World War II.

More immediately, there was no local control over Swanson's or the timber berths which the company logged. This lack of control had several consequences. First, the Indians and Métis of the region had become increasingly concerned about their long term futures by the mid 1960s. They were apprehensive about their lack of control over their resource base, and they wanted to remedy this situation by acquiring control over all local enterprises, including the lumber industry. Natives who worked at the mill had become experienced at most of the trades and skills required to run a mill. The critical exception was managerial experience. Management was apparently always provided by non-Native outsiders. Nevertheless, the Natives based at Fort Chipewyan, who presumably included Swanson's workers, felt that they could take over and operate either Swanson's mill or a mill of their own. The timber berths which Swanson's was logging were nearing their completion dates, and the next timber berth was 20 miles closer to Fort Chipewyan. Fort Chipewyan Natives wanted to log that berth themselves, claiming that it was part of their "heritage" (memo from R. P. Malis to M. D. Learmouth, 25 Sept. 1970, WBNP file 71/5). Pinnell recalls that "there was agitation for us not to go in that area" (1978).

The company did try to contract some aspects of its operation to local people, especially the logging. It is not clear which operations were proposed or what structures were envisioned. Nor is it known how the company approached the people, whether through individuals, the band

and chief, or the community development officer (CDO).[15] While this specific strategy for local control of the lumber industry may have been suggested and encouraged by the CDO (Pinnell 1978), the sentiment was strictly that of the local residents.

Coincident with these local political efforts was a new determination by government officials to turn Wood Buffalo National Park into a "real park." As an article in The Albertan pointed out, "To put it mildly, Wood Buffalo is not the shining jewel of the national parks system" ("Waves in Wood Buffalo," 16 Jan. 1971, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). To bring Wood Buffalo Park management in line with that of other parks, government decided that it wanted to save some stands of the very old white spruce as representative of unique park vegetation, to preserve "...the last truly magnificent timber stands in the Park that can be saved from the chainsaw" (letter from ? to B. F. Osborne, 2 May 1972?, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). As the correspondence from Laing (above) indicated, during the mid 1960s the federal government was worried about the existence of a commercial lumber operation within a national park. Questions were raised in the House of Commons about Swanson's operation (Pinnell 1978). Pinnell suggested that this change reflected a switch in power in the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources from the "developers" to the "conservationists" (ibid.). More generally, the late 1960s was a period in which strong criticisms were raised by Canadians about the wisdom of government development policy in the north (cf. McCormack 1980: 220).

Local dissatisfaction with Swanson's control over the industry, combined with the change in park policy, led the park administration to consider eliminating all logging and milling from the park, even though it had become economically important to the local Native population. The first step in this process was to prevent Swanson's from having direct dealings with the deputy minister in Ottawa; instead, the company was shunted to regional administrators in the west, who had no real decision-making powers:

> We were, in essence, pushed down the ladder. ... It was made very clear to us that our presence in the park was an embarrassment to them [Pinnell 1978].

On April 29, 1970, a meeting was held between officials of the National and Historic Parks Branch and officers of Swanson's to discuss the future of the timber berths and how to phase them out in an orderly way (memo from John I. Nicol to the Dep. Min. DIAND, 5 May 1970, WBNP file 71/5). Conspicuously absent from the meeting were representatives of the company's labor force or the Fort Chipewyan Indian bands. Their lack of control over the timber berths and the mill made it possible for their concerns to be ignored.[16]

This meeting did mention "...the need to avoid jeopardizing the significant employment opportunities which the company's operations provide to the local native population" (*ibid*.). A letter written the following year admitted that "...the operations do provide a good deal of badly needed employment for the native people of the area," and that therefore the government was reluctant to end lumbering in the park (letter from J. H. Gordon to Peter G. Kevan, 28 Jan. 1971, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). However, "native people of the area" were being broadly defined. A memo written in 1970 justified government actions on the grounds that the Fort Chipewyan Natives would inevitably suffer as a result of their reliance on the lumber industry, either sooner, if Swanson's moved to a new timber berth with no road access from Fort Chipewyan, or later, when

Swanson's was forced by lack of timber to leave the park completely.

But,

> The natives of the Fort McMurray area would undoubtedly benefit more from an Athabasca Block operation as access routes will be to the south [memo from W. McKim to Supt. WBP, 14 May 1979, WBNP file 71/5].

Swanson's was reluctant to leave its Peace River operation, which had at last become a profitable one (Pinnell 1978). The company may also have been concerned about its Native employees. The compromise decided upon was that the company would give up its timber berths on the Peace River in exchange for timber berth no. 503M in the Athabasca block, the old Primrose location. The mill was to be located across the Athabasca River and out of the park (Pinnell 1978; correspondence WBNP file 71/5). As Pinnell recalls,

> I think that they felt that rather than have us up in such a touchy area of the park, such as the delta, and mixed right in with their buffalo herds, they were committed to have us in the park for several years, so the path of least resistance was to get us way down in one corner where we wouldn't be noticed [1978].

The exchange was finalized on November 23 and 24, 1971 (surrender document, 23 Nov. 1971; agreement bet. the Queen in right of Canada and Swanson Lumber Co. Ltd., 24 Nov. 1971; both in WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). Logging at Sweetgrass Landing was to end by July 31, 1972 (memo from Franklin J. Coggins, Park Warden, to Supt. WBP, 24 Nov. 1971, WBNP file 71/5). The park administration believed that the exchange was a good one from a conservationist point of view, but that the company would also benefit by its access to new timber berths in a more profitable location (memo from John I. Nicol to Reg. Director, 6 Nov. 1970, WBNP file 71/5). It wanted Swanson's eased out of the park completely by 1980 (memo from Malis to Learmouth, 25 Sept. 1970, WBNP file 71/5).

People in Fort Chipewyan formed an "Emergency Action Committee" to protest the move and to put forward their own request to open their own mill, funded through special federal economic assistance. Their requests were denied on the grounds that it was "...imperative to preseve these areas..." of timber in the park, and that the logging along the Athabasca "...will provide stable employment for a much longer time than would the Scow Island Timber" (letter from Jean Chrétien to Paul Yewchuk, M.P., 23 June 1972, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). The residents did not give up; they sent a detailed letter to Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, outlining their concerns:

> The Swanson Lumber Company has provided a good share of the economic base for this community, as 80 to 90% of its work force is from Fort Chipewyan. As you are aware, this settlement has a high welfare level which is due in a large part to the lack of work in the community or near vicinity. To move the Swanson Lumber Company now would only increase the welfare level, as there is no guarantee that the company would continue to hire a high percentage of Fort Chipewyan people. Indeed it is highly unlikely that a road link will be developed between the proposed Embarras Portage site and Fort Chipewyan. Therefore it would be to the advantage of the company to hire from more accessible areas. ...
>
> [Leaving the mill at Sweetgrass]...would preserve the dignity of some of the men in Fort Chipewyan, by allowing them to work for a living, instead of unloading them on the unemplyment market [letter from B. F. Osborne to Jean Chrétien, 11 April 1972, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2].

The final word on the matter from the government was that logging could not continue in the area in the interests of preserving the remaining stands of mature white spruce (letter from ? to B. F. Osborne, 2 May 1972?, WBNP file 71/5 T4.2). This serious effort by Fort Chipewyan Natives to acquire control of the local lumber industry happened after the timber had been depleted, and park operational principles had changed: exploitation projects such as logging were seen as incompatible with park operational goals.

Unfortunately for both Swanson Lumber and the local Native labor force, the new operation at Embarras did not work out as had been hoped by the park administration and company officials. The company faced high operating costs, a depressed lumber market, and considerable difficulty in obtaining and holding labor. One source of this difficulty was the fact that the company did not develop a town site at the new location, due to the cost factor (Pinnell 1978). With no road from Fort Chipewyan to the mill site, access was inconvenient, an especially important factor if families were to be discouraged from living at the Embarras mill. As well, new social programs had been introduced by this time in Fort Chipewyan. These considerations resulted in few people from Fort Chipewyan relocating to the Embarras mill. Another source of difficulty was that the company had to compete for its skilled labor force with the booming oil sands development at Syncrude, near Fort McMurray, which paid higher wages and provided overtime. Finally, while the market for lumber declined in 1974, transportation rates "...went up fantastically" (Pinnell 1978).

The mill at Sweetgrass Landing closed in 1972; the mill at Embarras was built in 1972-73. It operated for only two years before it closed. The relocation was an expensive move. The company suffered great financial loss which was not recoverable from its new operation (Pinnell 1978). The economic losses must have been absorbed in other ways, however, because the company was still active in 1978.

The Fort Chipewyan Natives, on the other hand, had no other reliable sources of income, especially for large numbers of workers. The moving of the mill from Sweetgrass to Embarras was "tragic" for them, according to Pinnell (1978).[17] Because of the difficulties with the new location, most of the workers from Sweetgrass Landing moved to Fort Chipewyan when the mill closed in 1972.

Conclusion

While the Swanson Lumber Company was more important than the McInnes fishery to the local economy, many of the outcomes were similar:

1. As with the fishery, the entrepreneur was not Native, but an outside company which depleted the economic resources elsewhere and therefore looked to the Fort Chipewyan region for new resources to exploit.

2. Swanson Lumber justified its operation in terms of benefits to forest management and to the local Native population.

3. Company income left the region.

4. While wages paid were good for the region, the long term benefits from these wages went to the local stores, especially the HBC, which operated the store at the mill site as well as one in Fort Chipewyan. HBC income left the region.

5. The lumber company paid royalties and rents to the government. These payments were not reinvested in local projects which might have benefited local people either during the operation or following closure of the mill. Royalties were not used to compensate trappers whose traplines were damaged by the logging.

Here the similarity to the McInnes operation ends. The fishery was seasonal and did not occur every year, whereas logging and milling were seasonal, yearly operations. Many Fort Chipewyan Natives relied on the wage labor which the lumber operation provided. They became unhappy with the operation only when they wanted to acquire some control over this enterprise which was so important and beneficial to them.

They believed that if they gained ownership, they would ensure long term economic benefits and employment. Despite their wishes, government officials planned to turn Wood Buffalo Park into a "real" park, which took precedence over the welfare of the local Natives. It must have been discouraging for the people to see that the industry on which they depended could be eliminated despite their strong protestations.

One might speculate that the absence of Jack Stewart as Agent and spokesperson in this period of change was a factor in Native concerns being overlooked by the government. There is no evidence in the park records which were examined that Indian Affairs officials attempted to mobilize support on behalf of the Indians. The Fort Chipewyan bands and the Métis Association were not sophisticated political lobbyists at that time. In any event, the decisions concerning the fate of the Sweetgrass Landing operation were made quickly, elsewhere, and without local hearings.

The impact of the end of the lumber industry can be briefly summarized. First, there was an influx of sawmill workers into Fort Chipewyan, straining social services and housing and therefore partially responsible for the need to build new housing areas in the 1970s. Secondly, the need for wage employment may have led some former mill workers to leave Fort Chipewyan for employment in the tar sands development projects in the Fort McMurray vicinity. However, their number appears to have been small. Thirdly, the long period of regular dependence on wage labor completely interrupted the trapping lifeway. Wage labor rather than trapping became the new way of life for most of Swanson's former employees. Wage labor was centered in the town, not in the bush communities. Finally, the experience with Swanson's encouraged the belief that Natives must re-acquire control over their resources if they were to enjoy a measure of security.

BISON "MANAGEMENT": A COMMERCIAL SLAUGHTER OPERATION

Bison management in the park had four aspects until shortly after World War II. First, bison were protected against hunting by either subsistence or sport hunters, and protected from wolf predation by attempting to limit wolf numbers. Secondly, park policy allowed a limited annual winter hunt of old males by park staff with the assistance of mission personnel. That was to supply meat to the missions for use in their hospitals and residences and to Indian Affairs for relief purposes. Thirdly, the fire suppression program ended Native burning and resulted in the decline of high quality bison pasture in the park. Finally, scientific study of bison began with Soper's investigations in the 1930s and continued in the 1940s, with Fuller's research for the Canadian Wildlife Survey. These studies were to provide systematic information on the bison which would make possible a scientifically-based management program. Reports regarding the incidence of tuberculosis and realistic harvest possibilities would help determine a new bison policy for the park in the 1950s and 1960s, one which advocated commercial exploitation of the previously protected herds. In short, the introduction of the new bison "management" policy was another instance of underdevelopment of resources of Wood Buffalo Park.

1950-1962: Tuberculosis and Meat Production

Two factors played a role in the development of this new policy: the first was tuberculosis which had been discovered in the herds. The second was the post-war development orientation of the federal government and the park administration.

Fuller's bison studies indicated that tuberculosis was endemic among the herds, with more than 40 percent of the older bison showing signs of the disease (WBNP Fuller 1951b). He suggested that this high incidence of tuberculosis and the diminished range availability had limited the growth of the population of the park herds since the early 1930s (1951a; WBNP 1951c). He may not have been familiar with the literature discussing the disappearance of the park's once extensive grasslands (cf. Jeffrey 1961), but there is no doubt that the total amount of range available to bison in the late 1940s and into the 1950s was only a fraction of the range previously available in the 1920s and into the 1930s. Holsworth's study supported this conclusion. He commented, "Quite obviously, present forage management policies of total fire prevention is in conflict with maintaining buffalo summer range." He suggested that the park administration needed to decide if it wanted a bison range or a forest preserve. It could not have both (WBNP Holsworth 1960:14).

To the extent to which a decline of bison range played a role in the decline, or at least the lack of growth of bison populations, this problem was a direct consequence of park management policy, as Holsworth suggested. Because neither Fuller nor other park biologists identified this area for study, there was greater emphasis on the role played by tuberculosis in limiting bison numbers, and park officials placed some urgency on eliminating tuberculosis from the herds.

The second factor in the development of the park bison management policy was the post-war development orientation of the park administration, which was made up of the same government officials who were planning the development of the entire NWT. They viewed the bison as a potential source of cheap meat for the people of the north, especially at a time when populations of local wild game were in decline. As W. E. Stevens, the Superintendent of Game, pointed out in 1954, "A surplus of bison and a lack of fresh meat exist side by side in the Northwest Territories" (WBNP Stevens 1954:3). Bison were considered to be "...a valuable resource of the country and as such could be utilized" (ibid.:1) to provide "inexpensive meat for the northern market" (ibid.:5). Also, a market for bison meat was believed to exist in the south.

The need to eradicate tuberculosis, combined with the desire to make bison meat available to northerners, resulted in a new bison management strategy. It involved government investment in infrastructure (corrals, abattoir, etc.), tuberculin testing of bison, the slaughter of bison which tested positively, the salvaging of their meat, the slaughter of additional animals (especially cows and young) as needed to supply the orders for bison meat, and the marketing of that meat.

This new program began with the slaughters of 1950 and 1951, when

> ...the Department of Resources and Development...showed in a pilot project, the feasibility of harvesting some of the bison to supplement the meat supply of residents of the Mackenzie District [WBNP Fuller 1955:1].

Details of this pilot project are not known, but something can be inferred from the reports of the bison hunts of the years in question.

There is some confusion over the years in which hunts occurred. The 1950 kill reported by the Department of Resources and Development (1950:82), when 93 bison were slaughtered, may have taken place in the 1949-50 season. Meat from this slaughter went to the traditional recipients, the northern missions and Indian Affairs agencies. It was the last slaughter of the old style.

The pilot project began with the 1950-51 slaughter, when 119-120 animals were killed. For purposes of studying the bison, a larger proportion of the kill was cows and young than was common in the earlier hunts, which usually concentrated on older bulls (WBNP Fuller 1950-51a:1; 1950-51b:1-2; WBNP Mitchell 1976:9). A veterinarian was present for the first time. He was concerned with the conditions under which meat was being butchered. Apparently he recommended an improvement in slaughter and butchering conditions: "If the buffalo meat was to be eaten by humans,...then the beasts had to be slaughtered under more rigid conditions" than those of the field slaughters of the past (Ogilvie 1979: 51; cf. WBNP Mitchell 1976:9).[18]

Fuller suggested that the park should deal with this problem and with the problem of tuberculosis in the following way:

> It is planned to construct drift-fences and corrals on the Hay Camp meadow for the purpose of live-trapping bison. The trapped animals will be tuberculin tested; reactors will be slaughtered; negatives permanently marked and released. If the system works at the Hay Camp it can be put into operation later in other parts of the Park. Eventually, information of value concerning movements, longevity, age of contracting tuberculosis, etc., will thereby accumulate. Fences and corrals will also simplify the hunting and make better handling and butchering possible [WBNP Fuller 1951b:4].

This suggestion was not implemented immediately. However, the slaughter methods were improved for the 1951-52 season, when 218 animals were killed. A portable abattoir was used, and a veterinarian and a professional butcher (from Canada Packers) were hired (WBNP Fuller 1950-51a:1,3,6; WBNP Mitchell 1976:10). Fuller provided some detailed information on the operation, which involved both park staff and Native labor.

The butcher was supposed "...to train native men in butchering...," and "...he succeeded admirably" (WBNP Fuller 1950-51a:6). He created a small crew "...which would be quite capable of carrying on, unaided, another year" (ibid.). This training program suggests that the government envisioned an expanded bison slaughter program at a later date.[19]

There were still problems with the slaughter procedure: the killing and handling methods damaged almost ten percent of the meat. Fuller estimated that approximately 10,000 pounds of meat were discarded as unfit for human use "...mostly because of excessive bruising resulting from the shooting" (WBNP Fuller 1952a:30).[20] The discarded meat went to the Native butchers for "dog food"[21] and to the park for its own dogs (WBNP Fuller 1950-51a:6). The 218 bison killed produced about 68,925 pounds of good meat (ibid.:29), which was distributed to the missions at Fort Chipewyan and Fort Smith and to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration (Indian Affairs) at Fort Chipewyan and Yellowknife (ibid.:30). Fuller recommended again that holding corrals should be constructed prior to any increase in the annual kill. Holding corrals would make it possible to select anaimals for slaughter and reduce the waste of meat which had characterized the field hunt (WBNP 1952a:32). New facilities were constructed in 1952 at Hay Camp (WBNP Fuller 1952b:1), resulting in a "smoother operation," with less waste. 109,081 pounds of meat were produced in the 1952-53 season, all approved by the veterinarian in charge (ibid.:3,9). The Hay Camp facility was used to kill bison from 1952 to 1956 (WBNP Mitchell 1976:10).

Marketing the bison meat proved a problem for the park administration. While the government intended to recover its capital investment from the sales of meat and hides (WBNP Stevens 1954:4), northerners were too poor to afford the meat at prices set high based on the high cost of production (WBNP Rankin 1954:9; WBNP Stevens 1954:10). In the larger settlements, bison meat could not compete with imported beef (WBNP Stevens 1954:10). The government decided to solve this problem by selling the best meat to "outside" or southern markets in order to sell cheap meat in the north:[22]

> It is felt that the meat from the bison slaughters should not attempt to compete with beef and other meats imported into the Northwest Territories. There is a large proportion of the resident population of the country which cannot afford to buy any meat at present prices. But they might be able to purchase bison products if these can be made available to them at or near to cost. Large scale distribution of the less choice cuts could in part be financed by selling the choice cuts to compete with beef and other meats sold commercially [WBNP Stevens 1954:10; cf. WBNP Essex 1954-55].

Stevens suggested that marketing could be facilitated by flying the meat out (WBNP 1954:8). He recommended a sustained annual harvest of 500 bison (ibid.), although this figure was never reached except in the memorable 1954-55 season, when a record number of 907 bison were killed (WBNP Essex 1954-55:3; memo to R. B. Mitchell, Supt. WBP, 29 April 1974, WBNP files, Fort Chipewyan; see figure 11).

Essex said that in this peak year, 311,406 pounds of bison meat were sold for a total of $20,824.26 (WBNP Essex 1954-55; see table 10). Table 10 shows the amounts of meat purchased, by whom, and the per pound values. The major southern purchasers were P. Burns and Company, Canada Packers, and the McDonald Hotel, which purchased two-thirds of the total sold. Government and mission purchases, which were non-profit, amounted to 34 percent of the total. The value per pound suggests the quality of the meat purchased: the McDonald Hotel was buying only the choicest cuts, but government purchases were close in

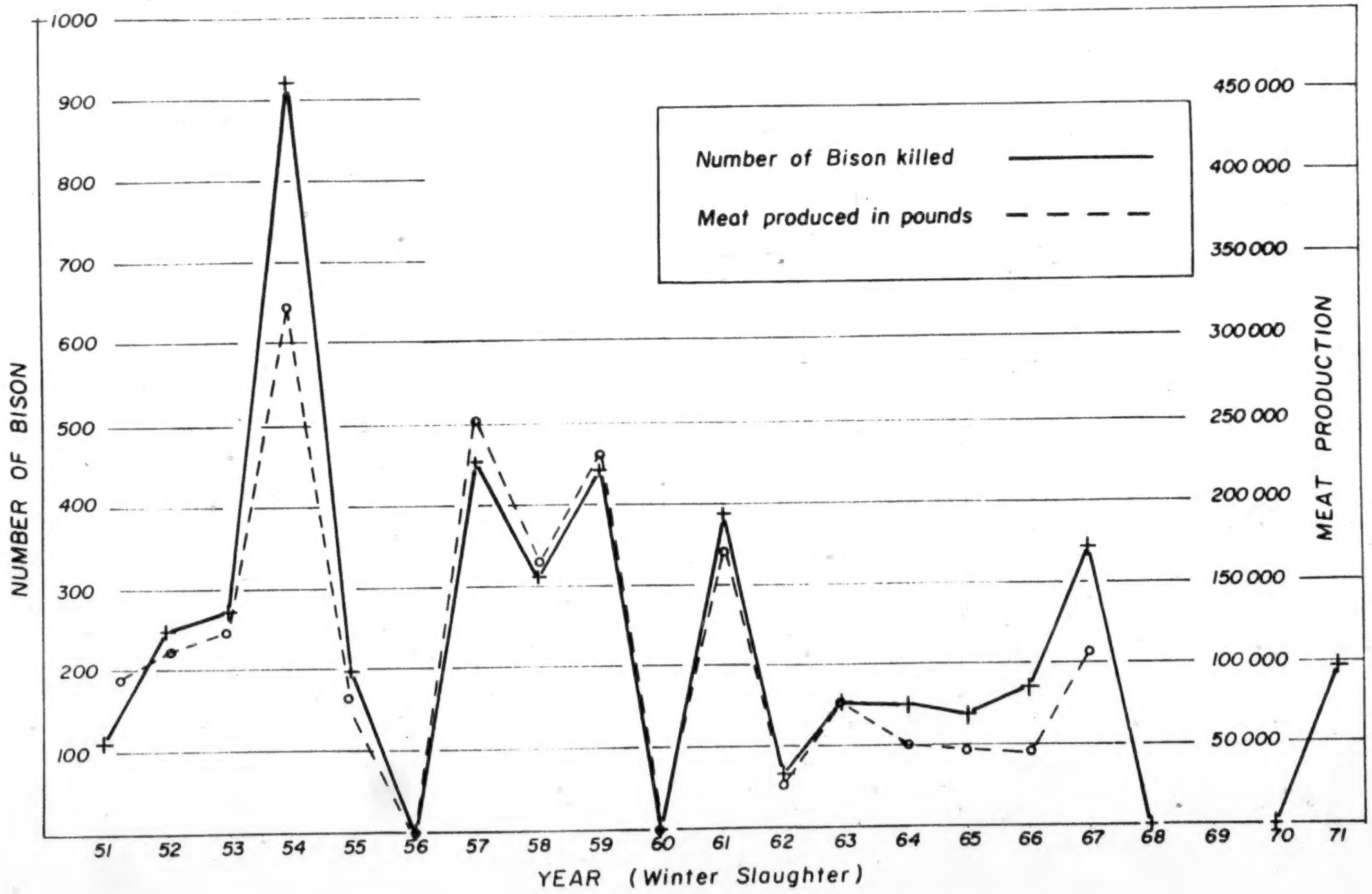

Figure 11. Bison Slaughters 1951-1971

Table 10

Commercial Sales of Bison Meat 1954-55

Purchaser	Pounds Purchased	% of Total Pounds	Value of Purchase	Value per Pound
P. Burns and Co.	117,693	37.8%	$5,891.05	$0.050
Canada Packers	76,514	24.6%	3,825.70	.050
R. C. Mission	51,840	16.6%	6,220.80	.120
Indian Affairs	47,332	15.2%	3,355.90	.071
HBC	8,632	2.8%	839.76	.097
Northern Affairs and National Resources	6,499	2.1%	289.25	.044
McDonald Hotel	1,178	0.4%	357.80	.304
Wood Buffalo Park	1,127	0.4%	44.00	.039
Others	5,591	1.8%	?	?
Totals	311,406	101.7%	$20,824.26	$0.067

(Data from WBNP Essex 1954-55)

value to the commercial purchasers, which suggests that the latter were not subsidizing the purchases of the former. The average value per pound of all meat sold was only 6.7 cents. These figures suggest that the real beneficiaries of the bison kill and from investment of federal funds in corrals and abattoir were commercial enterprises.

The park administration recommended that if high levels of bison slaughters were going to continue in the future, the herds should be managed in a very different way:

> With a policy of strict protection inside Wood Buffalo park it would be possible, if necessary, to regulate not only the number of animals in each herd but also the age and sex structure of that herd. Under natural conditions age and sex ratios are not optimum for the production of animals suitable for butchering. ... Development of the proper herd structure will take time but should be undertaken in any endavour where meat production is an aim [WBNP Stevens 1954:4].

This goal was radically different from the one which Stevens had identified on the first page of his report: "To preserve the present hybrid race of bison in as natural a state as possible" (ibid.:1). It was this aim which had led to the creation of the park and the prohibition of bison hunting in the first place. What happened in the mid 1950s was that a management program designed to eliminate disease and to help feed northerners had become an intensive commercial operation, although its full potential was never realized.

The years from 1957 to 1962 saw the introduction of a testing program for another disease, brucellosis, which causes abortions of first pregnancies in bison cows. Testing began on a small scale in 1956 and intensified in 1957. In 1957 and 1958, animals with positive brucellosis tests were slaughtered (Choquette and Stewart 1959:10). Park biologists raised the possibility of another problem which had not been identified earlier: that the diseased bison may have spread both tuberculosis and brucellosis to other animals sharing the ranges (SBNP Mitchell 1976:14; Choquette and Stewart 1959:11; cf. Hadwen 1942:22). Choquette and Stewart pointed out the potential seriousness of such transmission: brucellosis, they said, had been shown to be "...a much more severe disease in moose than in bison, elk or domestic cattle, and that is probably always fatal in this host" (1959:11).

The Hay Camp location was abandoned after 1956, and the slaughter operation moved to Sweetgrass, where an abattoir and corral system were built in 1956-57 (WBNP Mitchell 1976:13). This facility was used until 1962, but it was not satisfactory because of problems with flooding (WBNP Olsen 1962). The abattoir was used for the last ime in the winter 1960-61 slaughter (Nov. 1961). The park began the construction of a new abattoir at Hay Camp (WNBP Mitchell 1976:13).

1962-1968: Bison Management, Meat Production, and Anthrax

In 1962, the bison slaughter operation was moved to Hay Camp. That year a new problem threatened the bison: an outbreak of anthrax at Hook Lake, just outside the park in the NWT. Anthrax killed park bison in 1964 at Hay Camp and Lake One, and there was another outbreak in 1968 (WBNP Mitchell 1976:15-16). The number of outbreaks between these years is not clear from the records, which grouped occurrences of anthrax within and outside the park together.

Park biologists did not agree about the origin of the disease. Once it had entered the region, it could have been transmitted by a variety of means (cf. WBNP Choquette and Broughton 1967:6-9; Choquette 1971:258-9; Choquette, Broughton et al. 1972:131; Cousineau and McClenaghan 1965:23). Anthrax spores could "remain viable up to forty years or more" in the grasses and soils of the park, especially in areas subject to flooding, such as "low-lying marshy ground" (Pyper and Willoughby 1964:531). As park biologists pointed out, "...local ecological conditions favoured the persistence of soil contamination and the subsequent occurrence of explosive outbreaks" (Choquette, Broughton et al. 1972:132).

The park managers had to formulate a new management program to deal with a disease which was a threat to both animals and humans. They developed an immediate plan of action and a long term plan for management of the bison, to eliminate the disease. Short term measures entailed proper disposal of carcasses by burning and burial, vaccination of bison, removal of bison from areas where vaccination was not feasible, thinning of the herds to remove old and unfit bison, and continued surveillance of contaminated herds (field journals 1977; WBNP Choquette and Broughton 1967:9-19; cf. WBNP Mitchell 1976:16). The park planned to burn the area where the outbreak occurred but was prevented from doing so by bad weather. Only fifteen percent of the area was burned (Novakowski, Cousineau et al. 1963:236).

These short term measures were not completely satisfactory, owing to the inherent difficulties in trying to manage a large, wild, free-ranging animal population. Surveillance was difficult and expensive. It was impossible to keep bison from returning to areas which were presumed to have been contaminated. Vaccination provided only short term immunity (9-10 months)(WBNP Choquette and Broughton 1967:11-12; Novakowski, Cousineau et al. 1963:236; cf. WBNP Mitchell 1976:16).

Meanwhile, there were fears about the potential dangers to people and domestic livestock by the difficulty in eradicating anthrax in the herds. As one Canadian Wildlife Service biologist wrote,

> We owe it to the farmers of Alberta and Saskatchewan to the south to try to contain Anthrax whatever its source here and all medical preventive measures have a price [A. A. Currier, Addendum to report by Warden G. C. Lyster, 1972, WBNP files].

The park responded by devising an extensive program of bison management and anthrax control, which would have been implemented in 1969-70 had it been accepted (WBNP Novakowski and Choquette 1967; cf. WBNP Mitchell 1976:17-18).

This plan would have eliminated the free-ranging nature of the bison in the park and the NWT for at least fifteen years. It was a proposal to enclose all the bison in the park and adjacent years for five years and to "eliminate" all the bison which could not be enclosed or which would exceed the carrying capacity of the compound, estimated to be 4,000 animals. The bison would be kept corralled, tested for diseases, and vaccinated for an additional ten years. There would be slaughters within the compound to keep bison numbers down. At the end of this period, it was hoped that tuberculosis and brucellosis would have been eliminated and anthrax controlled. The bison would then be freed. Despite the evidence for the longevity of anthrax spores, this proposal did not include a controlled burning program.

The plan was not implemented, due to economic and political reasons (WBNP Mitchell 1976:18). Construction of the compound and renovations to the abattoir at Sweetgrass Landing would have involved "a massive expenditure with no certainty of success," and the elimination of all bison not enclosed would have been similarly expensive. Politically, the proposal was difficult: the park administration expected public protest against the large scale slaughters and enclosure, and the hunters in the NWT would have resisted the removal of one of their food sources. Instead, officials decided to continue the more modest program of vaccination, surveillance, and proper disposal of carcasses. The last outbreak of anthrax occurred in 1968, perhaps due to the vaccination program, which continued until at least 1976 (WBNP Mitchell 1976:30).

Bison were hunted commercially for the last time in 1967. Some meat was sent to Expo '67 in Montreal. But, as Sheilagh Ogilvie explains,

> The killing was ended in that year because the obvious incongruity of massive commercial slaughtering in a national park was recognized. Moreover, the unpredictable amount of meat to be obtained in any year, the deterioration of the Hay Camp abattoir, and the outbreak of anthrax in 1964, ensured that even at 40¢ a pound wholesale, buffalo meat was costing too much to ship south to supermarkets [1979:51].

Both the official policy of the Parks Branch and the economic and political difficulties militated against the continuation of large scale slaughters and commercial harvests. Harvests of bison since that time have been a return to the small kills of the previous periods, designed to meet local needs of the Natives of the surrounding areas.

Conclusion

The conclusions which can be drawn from this discussion are similar to those in earlier sections:

1. The slaughter program was initiated by the park staff in the interests of disease prevention and of northern development.

2. The park administration attempted to justify its program in terms of the diseases which needed to be controlled and eliminated, the benefits to the bison, to the northern residents, and to the country in general.

3. Native peoples of the region earned some income by working

for the park. They constructed slaughter facilities and worked on the slaughtering and butchering crews.

4. The federal government invested the capital required to build the facilities for the bison round-ups and slaughters. Revenues from meat sales were supposed to balance the investment. However, no cost-benefit analyses appeared in any file consulted, and it seems unlikely that any were ever conducted.

5. The park administration became committed to the success of the meat program and tried hard to develop markets for its meat during the 1950s.

6. Although many Natives believed that the bison were one of their resources, they were not allowed to kill bison for their own subsistence needs. They could obtain bison meat only by purchasing it from a store or by receiving it as social welfare. Moreover, they received the cheaper cuts, because the more expensive cuts were marketed outside the north in order to subsidize the slaughter program.

Although the park's bison management policies were well-meaning, they were contradictory: the slaughter program _cum_ disease elimination program entailed killing the bison in order to save them. Natives were not allowed to hunt bison for personal food needs, yet the park held large slaughters and sold the meat. The park had been established to protect the free-ranging, wild bison, yet serious proposals were developed that would have led to their full-time enclosure in one or more large compounds. These contradictions suggest that the park management policy for its bison, like the commercial fishing and lumbering management policies, developed on an _ad hoc_ basis in response to the needs of northern development and of southern meat packing plants rather than the needs of the local people who believed that the bison had been protected for so many years in order to meet their needs eventually.

These serious conflicts would surface during the 1960s, when the Native people of Fort Chipewyan protested the selling of their resources to outsiders. They may have been both angry and bewildered by the commercial slaughter operation that the park promoted throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. One man in Fort Chipewyan still talked in 1977 about the waste of the bison during these slaughters (field journal 1977 V:35). The decline in food resources and the game base was a major factor which forced people out of the bush and into wage labor. Perhaps if bison had been open for local subsistence hunting, there would have been less pressure on the park occupants to turn to the job market. "Modernization" and "development" are predicated on getting people off the land and into towns where they can serve as a labor force. Although there is no evidence that the bison management policies were designed to encourage this trend, they contributed to it.

ALBERTA AND ITS NORTHERN HINTERLAND

The federal government and the businesses which it fostered were the most important factors affecting the lives of the people of the Fort Chipewyan region during the 1950s and 1960s. However, the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia (B.C.) played increasingly important roles, both directly and indirectly, especially in the 1960s. After World War II, Alberta and B.C. eyed their relatively unexploited northern territories with hopes for the wealth which could be generated there. As with the federal government, economic development of the north was viewed as necessary for the interests of the provinces and Canada as a whole, not just "...a scheme to benefit simply those people now living in that area" (Royal Commission 1958:68). This and the following section will outline the major actions and projects which would affect the Fort Chipewyan region.

Alberta: A Post-War Entrepreneur

Richards and Pratt (1979) have discussed the transformation of Alberta's rural-oriented populism into an entrepreneurial state, dominated by metropolitan interests. These comprised "...an alliance of business and professional elites..." (1979:149). A crucial element in this process was the economic boom that followed discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947 (cf. inter alia Richards and Pratt 1979:44-45; Caldarola 1979:44; Morton 1972:498). The province encouraged foreign investment in this and other enterprises. It invested its new income in various infrastructures, including facilities for production and distribution, and in social measures designed to promote a healthy, educated labor force.

It hoped by these means to make other resources, especially those in the northern part of the province, exploitable. Of special interest were the tar or oil sands located in northeastern Alberta along the Athabasca River (cf. inter alia Parker and Tingley 1980; MacGregor 1974; Skoolrood, Sabharwal, and Lopatka 1981). The province was also interested in resources such as timber and mineral deposits. As early as 1939-40, the Annual Report of the Department of Lands and Mines reminded the province that

> Waiting in the background are the great gypsum deposits of northern and north-western Alberta [some in Wood Buffalo park], the development of which may perhaps be hastened as a result of the definite changes which now must inevitably come to the economic life of this province [Dept. of Lands and Mines 1941:10].

These interests were confirmed in the 1958 Report of the Royal

Commission on the Development of Northern Alberta. The Commission's mandate was to study "...the northern areas of the Province in relation to their present and potential development..." (Royal Commission 1958:iv). Its report included recommendations for Native peoples, for Wood Buffalo Park, and for commercial fishing.

Native Peoples

The Commission followed the federal government in dismissing the fur trade as a viable economic base for Native peoples in northern Alberta. The Commissioners concluded, "From now on they must adapt themselves to white man's ways" with provincial help (Royal Commission 1958:107). They believed that the development of northern enterprise woudl solve the Natives' economic problems and recommended

> That employment be recognized as a fundamental necessity in providing the environment and atmosphere which will lead to the ultimate adjustment of the Indians and Metis ...[*ibid*.:8; cf. p. 108].

To facilitate such "adjustment," they recommended that steps be taken to terminate Indians' special lifestyle and land rights. Specifically, there should be "...no additional land...set aside as Indian reserves," and "...Indians' land rights [should] be...allocated on an individual basis" (*ibid*.:109). Such recommendations anticipated the federal government's 1969 White Paper (Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Devel. 1969), which was a termination proposal.

Proposed Changes in Wood Buffalo National Park Boundaries

The park was a known location of timber and gypsum deposits, and the province believed that other resources might be discovered there if exploration were permitted. Logging was already happening in the park, which provided a precedent for other commercial enterprises (Royal

Commission 1958:8). The province believed that there was a disproportionately large amount of provincial land tied up in national parks (Potyondi 1979:196) and that Wood Buffalo Park was a very different park from Jasper and Banff (Royal Commission 1958:110). Accordingly, the Commissioners recommended that park regulations be relaxed to allow geological exploration and the development of mines within the boundaries of the park (ibid.:8,110). They saw no difficulty in protecting the bison from the prospectors who would enter the park (ibid.:110). They did not mention possible conflicts between prospectors and hunters and trappers, perhaps because they hoped that by this time all trappers would have become wage laborers.

This recommendation was followed up in 1959, when

> ...the Provincial Minister of Lands and Forests wrote the Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources questioning the consistency of a policy which encouraged industry in a national park originally established for the purpose of preserving its buffalo herds. The letter also suggested that if the area of the park within Alberta were returned to the province, steps would be taken to ensure the preservation of the buffalo [Lothian 1976:65; cf. Potyondi 1979:104].

Curiously, the federal minister, Alvin Hamilton, advised his provincial counterpart that the logging in the park was a type of "sanitation cutting" rather than a commercial operation (Lothian 1976:65). He rejected the province's request, but he also directed his department to reassess the status of Wood Buffalo Park, a process which is discussed in some detail by Potyondi (1979:104-8).

There was internal conflict within the federal department about the park's future. While Director B. G. Sivertz recommended that the Alberta portion of the park should be returned to Alberta, subject to the continued supervision of the federal government, the Head of the Planning Section suggested instead that only those areas critical for the preservation of "'...the essential wildlife habitats'" should be retained and established as a genuine national park (Potyondi 1979:105). The remainder should be turned over to the province.

Alberta was not satisfied with this cautious approach. In 1962, the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution calling for the return to provincial control of that portion of the park in Alberta (Lothian 1976: 65; Potyondi 1979:106). The federal government countered with the suggestion that it might consider exchanging part of Wood Buffalo park for lands in the Cypress Hills area, a proposal which the provincial government rejected (Potyondi 1979:106). Alberta found its efforts to gain access to or control over park lands further impeded by the transfer of the park to the Parks Branch in 1964.[23]

Commercial Fishing

The Commissioners suggested that the province should take greater advantage of its northern lakes for commercial fishing. It pointed out that even Lake Athabasca, which had been "...exploited minutely," had greater potential for commercial harvesting of fish stocks (Royal Commission 1958:26). However, it also noted the predominance of outside transients in commercial fishing in northern Alberta. Approximately 1,000 people were employed in this industry in northern Alberta. About two-thirds, or 600-700 people, were non-residents (ibid.). Northern Alberta was at this time zoned for commercial fishing in such a way that anyone could fish there, although fishing zones to the south were restricted to resident fishermen. The remaining one-third, or about 350 people, were residents, and the majority were non-Natives. Only a little over 100 Native people, or ten percent of all those employed in fishing, were employed locally (ibid.). Although the province considered commercial fishing a major industry for northern Alberta and especially for Native peoples (Parker and Tingley 1980:111), there is no evidence to indicate that commercial fishing as it was structured during the 1950s benefited many northern residents.

McInnes had returned to the Lake Athabasca region in 1948, when it began to fish Lake Claire for goldeye. In 1951, it returned to Lake Athabasca itself, based at Crackingstone Point. In 1954, McInnes began to fish in the west end of the lake and established a fishery in the Tokyo Snye area. According to Schlader (1978), this barge operation employed between 20 and 30 local people and about 60 people from the "outside," especially the Lake Winnipeg area. These figures are about the same ratio of residents to non-residents as for northern Alberta as a whole. The local people were clustered into three to four families, which meant that the benefits from this employment were not widespread in the community (Schlader 1978; field journals).

McInnes began to exploit a new fishing territory in the spring of 1961, or possibly 1962, when it took 150,000 pounds of pickerel (walleye) from Jackfish Lake (cf. Schlader 1978; Bidgood 1973:E1). The company included this amount with its commercial quota for Lake Athabasca (Bidgood 1973:E1). In 1963-64, the provincial government set a preliminary quota of 100,000 pounds for Jackfish Lake. The fishermen were able to fill this quota in three days. Schlader recalls,

> There was a big scramble to get your share of the limit. The guys went in there and they just dropped their nets and every mesh was a pickerel. There wasn't anything else there - just pickerel by the millions [1978].

Studies conducted by provincial fish biologists in 1965-69 demonstrated that this wealth of fish was due to spawning runs, which the company was exploiting. The lake was closed in 1967 to all commercial fishing, though some "highgrading" occurred, due to ineffective supervision by wildlife officials (field journal 1977 I:73; Bidgood 1973:E1; Schlader 1978).

Another company, Canadian Fish Producers, also fished Lake Athabasca (and Jackfish Lake?) for about three or four years during the 1950s (Schlader 1978). It ran a freshwater fish operation, which proved too costly to conduct (ibid.). McInnes, the company with longer experience and more equipment, was the only company to stay on the lake.

The impacts of these fisheries on Lake Athabasca fish populations and on the ease of exploitation of fish stocks in Jackfish Lake are not known. Jackfish Lake is a traditional fishery for the delta Chipewyan. While they were never employed by McInnes, they may have found, as did the people in the Lake Claire region, that subsistence fishing became more difficult as fish stocks were depleted.

More importantly, the local experience with commercial fishing during the 1950s and into the 1960s served as a consciousness-raising experience. One local fisherman recalls that when he fished non-stop for pickerel rather than taking breaks, the other local fishermen called him "greedy" (field journal 1977 IV:12). They may have viewed the outside fishermen similarly. By the mid 1960s they would begin to articulate their concerns about outsiders taking all the fish and income derived from fishing, an issue of considerable importance given the desperate need for non-fur trade sources of income during this period. In 1965 they submitted a brief on commercial fishing to a special Legislative Committee on Commercial Fishing. They stated,

> We...have always been on the unfavoured side of the fishing operations carried on in the area. ...[I]t is common knowledge that the fishermen of these Northern lakes have been beat before the fishing operations took place. ...[F]ishing operations have been conducted by outsiders in a manner opposed to our interests and advantage....
>
> We know very well that once the outside buyers or fishermen have cleaned these lakes they will move away but we will still be here. We also know that they will not pension us for the rest of our lives, or give us a devidend [sic] on their profits! We want a boundary, that is an area strictly reserved to the local Native people [Cremetchip Association 9 Aug. 1965; file in possession of the author].

While this and other briefs of the period bear the stylistic stamp of the local CDO Ray Albert, it would be wrong to conclude that it was his ideas they were expressing. At the heart of this particular brief was the wish by local people to control a resource located in their lands, a theme which has been documented in considerable detail in this and earlier chapters.

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE BENNETT DAM

B.C. had developed its own "Northern Vision" by 1954 under the political leadership of W. A. C. Bennett and the Social Credit party. James Howell (1978) and Martin Robin (1973) have analyzed B.C.'s endeavors in the Peace River area in the 1950s and 1960s. These culminated in the Portage Mountain hydroelectric project and the Bennett Dam, completed in 1967. The dam would change the water regime of the Peace-Athabasca delta and have major deleterious impacts on both the environment and the residents of the region. These impacts have been thoroughly documented in a series of studies prepared for the Peace-Athabasca Delta Project Group (PAD Proj. Group 1972; 1973a; 1973b) after the dam began impounding water. This section outlines the decision-making process which resulted in the construction of the dam as well as discuss the impacts of this project on the people who were still using the delta for livelihood at the end of the 1960s.

Construction of the Dam

Bennett's government equated prosperity with resource exploitation (Howell 1978:26; Robin 1973:225-6). The premier was also concerned about Alberta's *de facto* economic control over the Peace River country in B.C., and he wanted to develop stronger economic ties between this region and southern B.C. (Howell 1978:26).

The first major development scheme for the north was a proposal in 1956 by Wenner-Gren to build a major hydroelectric facility (Howell 1978:27-8). Although this project was not approved, it led to new considerations by the province of the possibility of generating power in the north for delivery to the Vancouver area and possibly for export to the U.S.

In 1957, the B.C. government had the Peace River surveyed, and potential dam sites were selected for evaluation. A report was submitted to the B.C. cabinet that fall on the possibilities of power development on the Peace. The cabinet decided to proceed with a first project (Howell 1978:28-9; Robin 1973:chp. 7). This project was linked politically to a scheme to cooperate with the U.S. in the development of the Columbia River, which Robin has interpreted as the incorporation of B.C. into the continental energy policy of the U.S. (1973:chp. 8). Construction on the Peace River or Portage Mountain project was underway by 1964 (Robin 1973:252). The Bennett Dam was finished in December, 1957, when the last diversion tunnel was closed, and the new dam began to impound water to fill its huge reservoir (Howell 1978:24).

B.C. had chosen to dam a river of considerable importance to down-river environments and users. The 1957 report to the B.C. cabinet had suggested that the consequent regulation of the river would benefit both Alberta and the NWT (Howell 1978:30). However, Howell claims that B.C. was aware of potential negative impacts of the project but chose to ignore them (ibid.:34-5). As Edwin Black concluded form his analysis of decision-making in B.C., there were few safeguards "...against tyranny and irresponsibility" in provincial decision-making (BLack 1968:41).

B.C. did discuss its proposed project with Alberta, beginning in 1957, when the investigation of the feasibility of the project began in earnest (Howell 1978:41). Howell concluded from the correspondence he examined that "It is apparent that Alberta was not actively concerned about protecting the interests of the people in the delta area" (ibid.:42), for three reasons. The first was that the Peace-Athabasca delta was considered to be an unimportant hinterland. Secondly, the possibility that water levels would fall was considered to be a federal concern, perhaps because this change was believed to be important primarily for navigation and for Wood Buffalo park. Finally, the province believed that it would benefit from the project (ibid.).

Although the project was undertaken in the days prior to comprehensive and mandatory evaluation procedures, it had to undergo some evaluation by federal agencies nevertheless. The hearings related to the granting of the licence were inadequate by today's standards and were considered a formality. The federal government had the power to intervene because of its jurisdiction over matters such as navigation and fisheries. It chose not to exercise that power. Howell concluded that it must therefore share some of the blame for the negative impacts of the dam. The Summary Report of the Peace-Athabasca Delta Project Group pointed out the confusion in the legal and jurisdictional issues relating to the interference with such rivers (PAD Proj. Group 1972: chp. 7). This situation has not yet been clarified.[24]

Despite concerns by some federal and provincial (Alberta) officials about the obviously deleterious consequences of the dam for the water levels of the Peace-Athabasca delta, no funding was provided for study of the problems, nor did the federal government move to protect its interest in the park until 1968, when water levels began to drop seriously (PAD Symposium 1971:14-15). By then it was too late to prevent the dam.

To summarize, the Bennett Dam is a classic instance of a "development" project based on external political and economic considerations. Although in theory it was designed to help "develop" the north, in fact it was designed to benefit users and developers located in southern B.C. and in the U.S. One result was that down-river users in the Peace-Athabasca delta would be harmed by this early northern mega-project, as the following discussion shows.

Environmental Impacts of the Bennett Dam

Water levels in Lake Athabasca and the Peace-Athabasca delta are determined by water levels of the Fond du Lac and Athabasca Rivers, which flow into the lake, and of the Peace River, into which the lake and the delta drain northward. The normal water regime prior to the Bennett was characterized by annual spring flooding of the Peace River, which led to a reversal in water flows. Water which would normally drain to the north would instead spill over the delta, flooding all low-lying areas. The primary impact of the Bennett Dam was the elimination of the spring flooding of the Peace River, beginning in 1968, as a result of the large volumes of water which the dam impounded. This reduced water flow was compounded by a natural regime of slightly-below average runoff from 1968 to 1970. The result was that in 1968 to 1970, summer water levels of Lake Athabasca were four to five feet lower than during the years 1960 to 1967. Many of the shallow lakes in the delta were little more than mud flats. Winter levels of all lakes grew progressively lower each winter (Rolf Kellerhals in PAD Symposium 1971:57; PAD Proj. Group 1972:19-21; field journals).

This change in water regime had major impacts on the plant and animal communities of the delta. Ed Hennan summarized the changes in plant communities which occurred:

> The changes in the water regime of the Peace-Athabasca Delta since 1968 generally have tended toward a relatively stabilized low water level situation, and aquatic-to-terrestrial succession has proceeded rapidly. ...
>
> Already, once-inundated areas have become mud flats, mud flats have become sedge-grass meadows, and meadows have been encroached by willows and tree seedlings. It is true that prolonged periods of relative drought have occurred in the past, but up to 1968 the floods have always returned, reversing the successional trend and maintaining the Delta's diverse and dynamic qualities [Hennan in PAD Proj. Group 1973a:k2; cf. H. J. Dirschl, PAD Proj. Group 1973a:Sec. J].

In other words, the end of the cycle of annual spring flooding began a "...10 to 15-year successional transition toward dominant willow communities..." (PAD Proj. Group 1972:74). The Bennett Dam was responsible for the artificial "aging" of the delta, or, as many concerned individuals termed it, the "death of a delta" (PAD Symposium 1971:1).

The consequences of these changes in water regime and plant communities for delta fauna can be summarized briefly: fish were particularly vulnerable to changes in water regime if they utilized the shallow lakes of the delta for spawning or wintering. Some lakes froze to the bottom, while others became so shallow that the water in them was too stagnant to support a wintering population of fish. Also, the elimination of the annual spring flooding was believed to interfere with some spawning patterns more directly (cf. Bidgood and Kooyman in PAD Proj. Group 1973a; PAD Proj. Group 1972:34-36,77).

Waterfowl were jeopardized by the reduction of available shoreline and nesting habitat. The immature fens, emergent vegetation, and mud flats which were preferred waterfowl habitat began to disappear due to the altered water regime (Hennan in PAD Proj. Group 1973a; PAD Proj. Group 1972:29-30,74).

Muskrats, the major source of cash income for delta trappers, as well as a major food source in fall and especially spring, were critically affected by low water levels:

> Low muskrat numbers on the Delta are attributed to low water levels. The most critical period is in winter when a shortage of water, restrictions of food accessibility, increased predation, and low temperatures place immediate stress on the muskrat population [Ambrock and Allison in PAD Proj Group 1973a:11; cf. PAD Proj. Group 1972:31-32,45-46,74-76].

The minimum depths for optimum muskrat survival were considered to be 2.5 feet in 1971 and 2 feet in 1972. However,

> At present, 70 percent of the Delta lakes do not fulfill these requirements. Approximately 45 percent of the muskrat population survived the winter of 1971-72. The shallower lakes were characterized by high mortality rates and numerous signs of predation [Ambrock and Allison in PAD Proj. Group 1973a:12].

Bison and moose were affected by the new situation in different ways. Initially, the exposure of terrain created new bison range. However, as the drying continued, it was expected that the sedges (Carex sp.) which were a major bison food resource would decline, eliminating much bison pasture (Allison in PAD Proj. Group 1973a; PAD Proj. Group 1972:32-33, 76-77). It was suggested that "Remaining grazing habitat in the Park might not, in that case, support the sizable herd now protected within the Park" (PAD Proj. Group 1972:77).

Moose, on the other hand, benefited from low water levels, in that more suitable moose pasture was being created (Allison in PAD Proj. Group 1973a; PAD Proj. Group 1972:32-34,77). However, these benefits would be only short term unless the trend to mature vegetation were halted by the strategic use of controlled burning. Allison suggested that such burning might be desirable as a way of managing moose populations (in PAD Proj. Group 1973a:N32).

The generally dire outlook was summarized by G. H. Townsend:

> Under the modified regime that results from full operation of the Bennett Dam, perched basin shoreline important to migratory birds is expected to decrease by approximately 50 percent, waterfowl production will decline an average of 20-25 percent, muskrat populations will decline 40-65 percent, bison habitat is expected to gradually shift to less of meadow and more of shrub type [less productive], and moose habitat is expected to increase by approximately 17 percent [in PAD Proj. Group 1973a:01].

Socio-Economic Impacts of the Bennett Dam

There is an unfortunate tendency in the reports of the researchers who worked for the Peace-Athabasca Delta Project Group to focus on the Bennett Dam as the sole or major source of socio-economic problems experienced by the residents of the region. Their often shallow analyses ignore the long developmental nature of this situation, the approximately 50 years of progressive underdevelopment of the region that has been documented in this and earlier chapters. Howell's study stands out for its recognition that the Bennett Dam was simply the latest of a series of events which added to the underdevelopment of the region:

> The low water levels in the delta acted as a precipitating factor, jeopardizing the already tenuous economy and life-style of the delta people [1978:53].

The immediate social and economic impacts of the dam were summarized by Phillips and Hetland for the Peace-Athabasca Delta Symposium, held in 1971:

> Loss of income, both monetary and in kind, earned by local residents from fish and wildlife represents a social cost from two standpoints. First, even if the lost income flow is offset by a welfare income flow, this substitute source of purchasing power comes from the public treasury and represents a fairly readily measurable social cost component....Second, there are non-quantitative social costs due to a greater community dependence on welfare. Such costs are realized in the negative effects resulting from the losses of employment that act on economic, political, expressive-integrative, and kinship institutions of the community [PAD Symposium 1971:241].

They suggested that "...welfare support is...generally below lost income levels" (ibid.:244), although no good supporting evidence was provided.

These consequences were delineated more carefully by symposium participants into potential economic and social losses or costs borne by local residents or users of the delta. Economic losses to the community included loss of current income, loss of earning capability of recent investments (in trapping, hunting, and fishing equipment), and loss of development potential. These economic consequences would have spin-off effects on local shopkeepers and dealers, who "...cannot sell to people with reduced incomes, and thus suffer secondary economic loss" (PAD Symposium 1971:8).

Social losses or costs were less easily measured, in that they "...cannot be measured or converted into monetary terms, but must be expressed in social parameters" (PAD Symposium 1971:8). It was suggested that the following problems would be experienced by community residents:

1. Disruption of time-use patterns,
2. Loss of job status,
3. Increased aspiration gaps,
4. Adjustment and learning stress, and
5. General value disorientation (ibid.).

Many other social effects were outlined which the symposium participants anticipated would occur in Fort Chipewyan, symtoms of "community disintegration" caused by this "rapid, unexpected, unexplicable and uncontrollable economic and environmental changes..." (ibid.:9). However, none of the follow-up study which would have been necessary to test these predictions was ever undertaken in any meaningful way, despite the prediction of the CDO at the time, Pat Dixon, that

> The community...will continue its present social deterioration and incidences of social decay and disorganization will become more prevalent, with great economic and social cost to the society as a whole [in PAD Symposium 1971:252].

Dixon and all other socio-economic studies associated with the Peace-Athabasca Delta Project ignored the causal role played in this process of "deterioration" by external agencies and the consequent inability of local people to alter the situation through their own efforts.

It was beyond the scope of this investigation to document the impacts of the Bennett Dam on the community. It seems likely, however, that it would be difficult to distinguish them in a qualitative sense and perhaps even quantitatively from socio-economic impacts of other aspects of the underdevelopment process. They may have been important in welding former hunters and trappers to the new economy of wage labor and social assistance, in that the altered environments of the delta made it difficult for persons to hunt and trap there, even on a part-time basis (cf. Radford 1971). These changes may have been a factor in the decision by some Chipewyan Indians to leave the reserve, which was located mostly within the delta, and move to Fort Chipewyan.

There were other local consequences of the Bennett Dam which some individuals, though probably not local residents, may have considered to be positive. The first of these was that a large amount of research funds and work became available for scientific investigation. Research money was provided by the governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and possibly other sources. The delta was briefly inundated by researchers, who utilized the expertise of local people while conducting their studies. The bulk of this income and all the professional benefits accrued to outsiders. Moreover, none of these outsiders appears to have had any long term commitment to the region, in that none of the long term follow-up studies were ever conducted, at least not in the realm of socio-economic issues.

Secondly, these studies recommended the construction of various structures to control water levels in the delta. Some projects were initiated in the 1970s, but they apparently provided jobs mainly for outsiders, not for local residents (field journal 1975). Their efficacy is doubtful (field journal 1977).

Finally, the Bennett Dam provided an opportunity for consciousness-raising for both local people and outsiders. Outsiders, in particular, became more aware of the fragile ecosystems of northern environments and their vulnerability to damage, sometimes irreversible, as a result of "development" projects. However, the problems which the Peace-Athabasca Delta Project Group identified for future investigation and resolution have not been investigated in more than a minimal way. They are far from satisfactory resolution and will plague any future mega-project with local impacts.

CONCLUSION

The course of events which this chapter has discussed for the post World War II decades suggests a situation of positive feedback: as the fur trade economy was allowed and even encouraged by government to deteriorate, Natives were forced to turn to other sources of income. This change combined with government interventionist ideology for the north to justify an increase in the levels of services which governments provided to northerners as well as to outsiders involved in business ventures in the north. Local stores benefited from wage employment and social assistance payments. They grew less dependent on income from trading furs as they became more involved in retailing. Therefore, they were increasingly reluctant to support the uncertain fur trade through the credit system, which made it difficult for Native trappers to remain in the bush. Many people left the bush settlements to find work in Fort Chipewyan, at Sweetgrass Landing, and other localities. As Peter Usher suggests,

> The degradation of the traditional sector forces people out of it, and provides a pool of cheap, surplus labour for the developed sector [1976:31].

One study estimated that by 1969, only 61 percent of the male labor force in the region was trapping, or 226 trappers. Of these, only "...10-15% can be considered as full season, serious, productive trappers" (Moncrieff, Montgomery and Associates Ltd. 1971:B46), or 22-34 men. Therefore,

> ...far fewer families are being supported by and relying on the avails of trapping. Very few trappers, even those very good trappers producing as much as

> $3,000 a year, are able to maintain an average-sized family of six without supplementing his [sic] income through welfare, or in some other manner [ibid.:B47].

Trapping was for most men an occupation rather than the focus of a lifeway.

The problem which most local residents faced was that the employment available to them during the post-war decades did not live up to the post-war rhetoric about the benefits to Natives of northern "development." As Rea has pointed out, "Historically, the north has displayed a tendency toward 'growth' without 'development'" (1976:25). While the productive capacity of the region had increased, it was still based on primary rather than secondary sector activities (ibid.). Only small percentages of the financial benefits went to the Fort Chipewyan people or were reinvested in the region, other than to expand the primary sector. Most benefits accrued to outsiders (cf. Usher 1976; Marchak 1981:44-46). What government and industry called "development" in the Fort Chipewyan region was actually underdevelopment, in that people were displaced from the land, the land was degraded by exploitative activities, income left the region, and the overall condition of Native peoples worsened.

NOTES

[1] Canada's subordination was confirmed in a 1947 military agreement for Arctic defence. It resulted in the construction of northern weather stations with radar screens and three lines of defence, culminating in the DEW-line in 1955. Creighton interprets these events as another Canadian sell-out to the U.S., and he fingers Lester Pearson as the man who "...confirmed and emphasized Canada's status as a military

dependency of the U.S...." (1976:241).

[2] Oliver Glimsdale of the Alberta Fish and Wildlife Service very generously made data about trapping in Alberta available to me.

[3] Unfortunately for the ability of local residents to take advantage of this possibility, some trapping areas are still held by men who live outside the region. As well, there is no reason to believe that this process can be reversed, with large areas subdivided into several smaller ones in response to higher fur prices. In other words, it is possible that a few trappers could end up with inordinately rich trapping areas, leading to further economic differentiation within the community of trappers.

[4] The Edmonton Bulletin carried a similar story to that of the Star, with the heading, "New Fishing Industry for Northern Alberta." The clipping bears a notation by a park official, "This is the worst yet" (PAC RG 85 v.1394 file 431/199 pt. 1).

[5] This same letter noted that a commercial fishery would require considerable capital outlay, since there had been no commercial fishing on Lake Athabasca since 1945, when McInnes discontinued local operations. The fishery would require a quick freezing unit, a reefer barge, about 20 small boats, and a number of other small, open boats and miscellaneous fishing equipment (ibid.).

[6] In 1949, McInnes requested that the season be extended to July 31. Sprules supported this request on the grounds that the lake was not over-exploited and that "...additional catch would add considerable [sic] to our knowledge of its productive capabilities." Also, he asserted that "extension would be advantageous financially to native fishermen...,"

although this statement is not borne out by Stewart (telegram from Wm. Sprules to R. A. Gibson, ca. 12 July 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3).

[7] Because this archival research was conducted in 1978, I had access only to those documents which were 30 years old or older. Therefore, I was not able to pursue park records related to fishing and many other topics into the 1950s and '60s, except through the generosity of park staff in Fort Smith and Fort Chipewyan, who made some files available to me. I should like to thank Warden Sandy McLain for his assistance in locating materials, as well as Warden Gerry Lyster and Superintendent Bernie Lieff.

[8] Philip Mandeville commented about the 1949 season,

> Most of the fishermen are not doing as well as they should, some are fishing in lake Mamawi these are not doing much, but there are four boats doing well, these men are more experienced in this kind of work and they are also better than most, in trapping and other work, these are: Solomon Shotman [sic], Charles Marten, Alfred Benoit, John Gladue and Alex and Peter Ratfat, these men will have something ahead when the fishery is over, however, as for the rest I doubt very much that they will break even, and are more likely to be in debt ["Report on Claire Lake Fisheries," 8 July 1949, PAC RG 85 v. 1254 file 431/199-1 pt. 3].

[9] The discussion in this section relies mainly on interviews and on park records made available to me by staff at park headquarters in Fort Smith. See note 7.

[10] Most of this discussion is based on the recollections of Stu Foster of Eldorado Nuclear Limited (Foster 1978), who was at that time Eldorado's plant superintendent at the mine.

[11] Stewart may have anticipated the opening of this mill as early as the spring of 1953, when he noted in his journal,

> Another sawmill is to be opened in Wood Buffalo Park, and they are to use local labour, which will help the people here a lot [PAA Stewart 6 March 1953].

[12] Interviews with two company executives, Fred Pinnell (1978) and Allan Wahlstrom (1978) of Swanson Lumber Company, as well as with Fort Chipewyan residents, provide the basis for the detailed discussion of the most important mill, Swanson's at Sweetgrass Landing. Pinnell's account and material from Wood Buffalo Park files at Fort Smith are the bases for the discussion of the sequence of events which led to Swanson Lumber becoming the sole operator in the park and then leaving the park entirely.

[13] However, Card estimated that in 1963 in the Lesser Slave Lake forestry industry, only about 40 percent of the "local value" of lumber products remained in the area (1963:99).

[14] The company also claimed that logging opened up the forest for animal pasture, which was probably true.

[15] By the end of the 1960s, the Indian Agent had been nearly phased out in favor of band control of its own programs, with the assistance of regional Indian Affairs officials and a community development officer.

[16] Local park staff also played little or no part in these negotiations. A letter written by the Regional Director stated, "We were disappointed that details of the exchange were finalized before the Regional Staff and the Park Staff had an opportunity to make comments" (letter from R. P. Malis to M. D. Learmouth, 25 Sept. 1970, WBNP file 71/5).

[17] The IWA estimated the economic loss to Fort Chipewyan as

$25,000-30,000 per month, or $300,000-360,000 per year (per. commun., IWA, Edm. office).

[18] In other words, the previous field slaughter conditions had been adequate when the meat was destined for welfare clients, but inadequate when the meat was to be marketed more widely. This discrepancy in standards continued into the 1960s. A memo written by R. S. Hodgkinson, the Administrator of the Mackenzie, commented on a field slaughter:

> This meat, butchered under primitive field conditions without benefit of abattoir facilities, whilst fit for human consumption, is obviously a rather crude product and not fit for commercial purposes. We therefore propose that this meat be used for Welfare purposes by Indian Affairs and Welfare Division [in WBNP Novakowski 1964,1965].

[19] Fuller provided some revealing information on ethnic relations between Natives and Euro-Canadians in this report. He explained that the butcher, D. Van Dyke, succeeded as well as he did because

> Although without previous experience with half-breeds and Indians, he quickly developed an awareness of certain traits which are strongly developed in these people's. For example, the tendency toward an inferiority complex is usually marked, and tact and understanding are required to draw out and fortify the self-confidence of the individual. Mr. Van Dyke was patient in demonstration and in correcting mistakes, but at the same time was able to berate carelessness and sloppy work without insult to sensitive personalities. His own dexterity and the keenness of his knives inspired admiration in his pupils, and the best of them sought to emulate him and took a good deal of pride in their accomplishments in this direction [WBNP Fuller 1950-51b:6].

Fuller described the social arrangements for the crew: the park personnel, including Fuller, slept on bunks in a caboose, while

> The men all lived in the one-roomed patrol cabin. Every foot of floor space contained a bed at night. The atmosphere became fouled with the by-products of bloody mocassins [sic], overalls, mitts and so forth, hung wherever convenient, to get dried before morning [ibid.:7].

He was concerned about the "morale and efficiency" of the men in the caboose, but he had no comments about the morale of the Native men in the crowded cabin.

The park superintendent, E. H. Essex, made similar comments when he reported on the 1954-55 slaughter:

> Local men should be employed. The establishment is not suitable for Union men, in that long hours, poor facilities for working, isolation, and unsuitable accomodations [sic] are a few of the anticipated complaints [WBNP Essex 1954-55:3].

In other words, these poor facilities were satisfactory for native workers. The observations of Fuller and Essex indicate the different standards which existed for Native and Euro-Canadian personnel. The park was evidently unwilling to invest the additional funding which improved facilities would have required. There is also the suggestion that if better facilities were available, local men might not get the jobs in the park.

Another point which should be mentioned here is that despite the traditional role played by Native women in butchering animals, the park administration sought only men to work at this task. The officials hoped to meet some of the labor needs of the local people, as well as to train them to provide labor for the slaughter operation in the park in the future. However, the effect was to undermine women's economic contributions, in that only men were expected to be economic producers in non-domestic situations.

[20] In contrast, Native subsistence hunters would have wasted little meat through their hunting and butchering procedures. This 10,000 pounds of meat would have fed a lot of local people who needed additional food at this time.

[21] Stevens once suggested that Natives should be allowed to hunt the "wild" herds, but "...with the meat being made available not for human consumption but for dog feed" (WBNP Stevens 1954:9). He did not explain how this use could be enforced. If tuberculosis was a major health hazard, his suggestion was irresponsible, in that one standard was being enforced for market consumers and another suggested for local Natives.

[22] This proposal was not as new as it appears here; Fuller mentioned in an earlier report that bison meat had been sold across Canada in the winters of 1952-1955 (WBNP Fuller 1955:1-2).

[23] This history provides some insights into the current conflict over the land which is to be provided to the Fort Chipewyan Cree band for its reserve. The Cree band claimed land within the boundaries of the park, especially at Peace Point and more recently at Embarras Portage. Although Alberta has been reluctant to grant land for reserves, its willingness to do so in this instance may be related to its eagerness to gain access to the park. While it is willing to make land available for the reserve, it is willing to grant only surface, not subsurface rights. It may view the land claims process as its own vehicle to resource exploitation in the park.

[24] This lack of resolution is relevant in the 1980s in light of proposals by both Alberta and B.C. to construct more dams on the Peace and Slave Rivers and to divert northern waters to southern regions. Although the Peace-Athabasca Delta Project Group recommended that legal and jurisdictional problems should be resolved, no level of government has been willing to tackle this thorny area.

CHAPTER 8

A PROLETARIANIZED MODE OF PRODUCTION

The last chapter discussed the modernizing of an economy in the Fort Chipewyan region, one in which wage labor and corporate control of the means of production expanded, and independent commodity production and close ties to the land by Native residents had diminished. Production was still in the primary resource sector, however, and represented growth (expansion), not development, of the region's economic potential. The labor of the local Natives was marginal and sometimes used only because the government insisted upon it. The region itself was peripheral to the centers of economic and political power and decision-making.

This chapter examines the consequences after World War II of this situation for Native mode of production and lifestyle. It discusses the choices which the people of the region made regarding how they would support themselves and cope with the range of dilemmas - economic, political, social - which confronted them.

Peter Gutkind says that modernization creates "...a multiplicity of choices and alternatives...," as people "...reject the past as a guide to the future..." and attempt "...to bring rationality to the understanding, the analysis and the future and purpose of contemporary society" (1979:399). Yet in Fort Chipewyan, there was not a true expansion of possibilities. While some choices multiplied, especially those relating to wage labor, social assistance, and town life, others became more difficult or disappeared completely, especially those choices relating to the fur trade and the traditional bush life. As

Usher points out, in a situation where economic dualism between modern and traditional sectors exists, "...the expansion of one may necessitate the degradation of the other" (1976:30). That is, only those choices which were compatible with the new system of developed capitalism were supported, while those choices which would have allowed people to continue their traditional lifestyle were discouraged through deliberate policy and lack of government support.

The Native peoples of the region did not reject the past but were guided by it as they made decisions which were as rational as they were a century earlier, when they had committed themselves to a fur trade mode of production. They formed solutions to their problems which were rooted in both their traditional culture and in their analyses of the contemporary situation. They approached these problems collectively and individually. On the one hand, they continued their efforts to gain greater control over land and resources and over the institutions important to their lives. They wanted to redress the economic and political circumstances which they believed were unjust and were creating and perpetuating their poverty. They also acted as individuals and as members of larger social groupings to restructure their communities so as to provide continuity with their immediate post, provide necessities for themselves, and cope with the changes imposed by government agents and by businesses operating in the region.

People abandoned the bush communities for permanent residence in Fort Chipewyan. The shift in settlement pattern is interpreted here as an indicator of a major shift in ground rules and strategies, and in underlying decisions relating to material and social reproduction by individuals comprising social groups (cf. Buchler and Selby 1968:68;

Lévi-Strauss 1967:285; Hole and Heizer 1973:354-356).

Underlying all the choices by individuals was a new means of reproducing the society (a "proletarianized" mode of production) which was affected by the importance of wage labor and/or social assistance as sources of livelihood. A traditional, though transformed, bush sector persisted; it was subsidized by these new sources of income. The new mode of production is therefore interpreted as an outcome of the constraints and possibilities in both the fur trade mode of production and the expansionary capitalist mode of production.

THE FIGHT FOR LOCAL CONTROL

Fort Chipewyan Natives knew that they were not the primary beneficiaries of the post-war exploitative projects, contrary to the non-Native rhetoric of development. They were aware, at least generally, of some of the causes of the deteriorating post-war economic situation. However, they were much less knowledgeable about how they might lobby effectively with the decision-making agencies elsewhere to alter the local situation. Indeed, major structural changes in the development process were probably impossible, given the political economies of both Alberta and the nation. Nevertheless, Fort Chipewyan Natives did attempt to change the rules of the game so that they could become winners rather than losers. Both Indians and Métis became involved in political efforts designed to regain control of the land and its resources. They believed that such control would make a hunting-trapping economy more viable and would increase the benefits they could gain from wage labor. Not incidentally, they expected that earned income would reduce their dependency on social assistance, which they saw as problematic, albeit occasionally necessary.

Their political efforts were in two directions. The Cree band continued to insist on the settlement of their land entitlement under Treaty 8. More generally, all Natives of the region joined forces to lobby for increased and even total control of all local resources and local extractive enterprises, particularly the sawmill and commercial fishing. These efforts are outlined in this section.

The Cree Band's Land Entitlement

The Cree band continued to ask for the establishment of a reserve within the boundaries of the park throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Their requests, which were usually channelled through Indian Agent Jack Stewart, were related to their economic difficulties. For instance, the request they made in 1949 for a researve followed the division of the park into registered trapping areas, which they had opposed. Stewart reported that the

> Cree Band asked for an Island in Wood Buffalo Park between Quatre Forches [sic] River and Coupe River for a Reserve. I had to explain again to the band that registered areas (Trapping) were here to stay and that they might as well make up their minds to make it a success [PAA Stewart 27 Dec. 1949].

However, the band pursued the matter, but ran into obstacles resulting from the allocation of individual trapping areas to Métis:

> Had a talk with Chief and Councillors of the Cree Band re the area they want for a Reserve. The Chief Park Warden does not want to help them get the area they are asking for as there are halfbreed Trappers already registered there and he offered another Island but the Band does not want that one and I do not blame them much as it is not as suitable as the other one asked for. The Island asked for would be within easy distance of Chipewyan [PAA Stewart 30 Jan. 1949].

The band said that if it could not obtain a reserve in prime muskrat trapping territory, at least "...a part of the delta [should]...be put aside as a communal area, so that any trapper who had no rats could go there and trap..." (ibid. 18 June 1951). This request was refused.

Throughout the 1950s, the band tried with Stewart to identify the exact area wanted for a reserve (PAA Stewart 13 June 1955; 16 June 1955; 29 Dec. 1958). They vacillated in choosing a location, which may have reflected band hopes to choose land which it would have a realistic chance of receiving, which would suit most members, and which would provide resources for both hunting and trapping and extractive industry.

In 1959, the Cree band submitted a brief to the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Indian Affairs, which raised the question of a reserve and the matter of economic security of band members, then and in the future:

> What makes us worry more than the present situation, is the future outlook not only for ourselves, but most of all for our children. We have nothing to offer them to better their standards of living. What then can we give them to help them plan their future? These children receive a good education, but what can we offer them after they leave school? Will they have to leave their local environment to earn a livable wage? Even if some do so, the majority will always remain here, and it is here that we must try to provide them with an opportunity for progress and a higher standard of living.
>
> It seems to us that if we could have a Reserve, a place of our own, where we would feel and be at home, this would give us an element of stability and of security for the present and also an opportunity to plan and organize the future for our children [Request of the Indians of the Cree Band of Fort Chipewyan, to be presented to the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons, on Indian Affairs, 26 Dec. 1959, cf. also Minutes of the Band Meeting 16 June 1967; both in Archives of the OMI].

Almost a decade later, the Cree band continued making similar requests, although they had more specific benefits they expected to receive through creation of a reserve. In a brief submitted to the governments of Alberta and Canada, the band explained why it wanted the Peace Point area for its reserve:

> We feel that the Peace Point area has a good future. The area that we picked out has good land for farming and gardening [I]t has good timber cover which would enable us to start a lumbering operation and as it is close to the gypsum deposits of the area there will some time be jobs available for our people. ...[W]e do not feel that the economic future of the other areas is very good [Brief submitted by Cree Band to Hon. A. O. Fimrite, Rep. of the Alberta Human Resource Devel. Auth. and Mr. R. Ragan, Reg. Director, IAB, 19 Aug. 1968, Archives of the OMI].

Despite the strength of these requests into the 1980s, the Cree band did not obtain its reserve, because of delays and impediments created by both the federal and provincial governments (cf. McCormack 1979b for a consideration of some of these factors).

Indian -Métis Cooperation

As the local economy deteriorated, all the residents of the Fort Chipewyan region became concerned with how to remedy the situation. Cooperation among the various segments of the regional population increased, facilitated by the fact that Natives began to move to Fort Chipewyan in the mid 1950s.

In 1963, the chiefs and councillors of both Indian bands and prominent men in the Métis community wrote a long letter to Premier Manning of Alberta, in which they outlined their analysis of the situation and their suggestions for improvements (letter from Fort Chipewyan leaders and residents to Premier Manning, 30 May 1963, Fort Chipewyan economic problems 1963-65, file in possession of the author). They were worried about the high levels of unemployment, the poor returns from the fur trade, and the high costs of merchandise:

> What worries us Premier Manning is that over 600 of our population is now under the age of 16 years. In a few years our population will be more than double and our men with families will be on Welfare and our young men will

> be unemployed, idle and disturbed men hard to handle. We know that Welfare is nessary [sic] when men are out of work but Welfare does not buy the nice things of life or keep our bodies and minds busy and healthy [ibid.].

They did not believe that education was the solution for most people:

> ...the ones who don't make out so good in school [the majority] must use our only means of making a living here and that is with our natural resource here surrounding Fort Chipewyan [ibid.].

They said that the region was resource rich, but cash poor. How could this be? They believed it was because neither the sawmill nor the commercial fishing operation employed many local people, nor did they contribute to the local economy by supplying cheap lumber or by ordering the manufacture of implements such as fish boxes or yawls, which had to be imported into the region. They thought the fur trade did not provide maximum returns to trappers because the processing and marketing systems were outdated (ibid.).

What they wanted, they said, was someone to help them organize so that they could gain control over both the resources and the industries:

> Many years ago we were a proud people and planned our own lives, now with this new way of living we find ourselves too dependent on transient people who come here and don't know us and our proud past, when they learn our way of living, then they move away and we have to go through this painful thing again with new transients who boss and try to control us. We need this organizer so that these transient people become a service to our leaders not a control [ibid.].

They wanted assistance so they could work out appropriate solutions for themselves, and they wanted enough power to implement the solutions on which they had decided. The latter shows consensus by the local people about the causes of their problems and how they should be remedied.

The two chiefs followed this letter with another one, this time to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, in which the analysis was even more explicit:

> We have been living here in Chipewyan under the most penurious conditions ever since the transition from trapping to industrial work began. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that we are sorely handicapped by lack of experience in this new industrial field, in addition, the opportunity to work and learn is practically nonexistent.
>
> At present, we have 250 men out of work, without hope of finding a job. These men and their families are either fully dependent upon the Indian Affairs Branch for rations or on some other form of welfare.
>
> The physical harm done to our people is far outweighed by the mental deterioration brought about by idleness.
>
> We have been told that we are "a burden upon society." How can _we_ change this situation? Can _you_? Can _anyone_ restore our trapping and hunting grounds to their original state? Are we to suffer indefinitely because industry in its many forms has robbed us of our heritage and destroyed our way of life?
>
> If we are a burden, it is not be [_sic_] choice. Why not give the opportunity to work for a living, and acquire the means by which we could live a better and fuller life [letter from Fred Marcel, Chief for Chipewyan Band, and John Cowie, Chief for Cree Band, to the Hon. Guy Favreau, 15 Sept. 1963, Fort Chipewyan economic problems 1963-65, file in possession of the author]?

The government responded by introducing a program of community development to Fort Chipewyan. However, the basic structural conditions which contributed to the powerlessness and marginality of the Fort Chipewyan people were not altered, and they continue to plague the region until the present.

THE MOVE TO TOWN

Settlement relocation and major shifts in lifestyle were individualized "solutions" to the problems which individual Natives faced and the possibilities which seemed to be available to them. Although a few Indians and Métis left the bush for residence in Fort

Chipewyan during the 1940s, the major residence shift occurred in the 1950s and through the mid 1960s. This shift has not been studied in detail by other analysts of the Fort Chipewyan situation, who have simply assumed that there was a shift in residence which can be interpreted as an aspect of acculturation. They contend that life in the bush was so difficult that people gladly gave it up for life in Fort Chipewyan, with all the benefits and services which were presumably available to them there. This explanation is also offered by some local residents. One man suggested that Indian "laziness" was a contributing factor (field journal 1977 VI:13), while another maintained that the government lured the Indians to town with its promises of services: "We'll feed you; we'll give you a house; we'll give you welfare; we want to teach your children" (field journal 1977 II:78; cf. 1977 I:43).

Sheila Mathewson, in an historical geography of the community, attempted to justify this interpretation by citing a park warden who talked in 1947 about a "drift" to the settlement as a result of five factors: family allowances, closed season on beaver and the scarcity of fur, limited credit availability, and poor fur prices (1974:91). She interpreted this statement, which appears to agree with the analysis presented in earlier chapters of this study, to mean that "The disadvantages of bush life were always apparent in the 20th century" (ibid.:94). She concluded that people who had been forced to remain in the bush were eager to give it up "...when wage-earning, or welfare, have provided alternatives to the land-based way of life" (ibid.):

> Families have moved from the surrounding area into the settlement in response to schooling requirements, housing incentives, and because of the increasing freedom from the trapline economy afforded them by expanding welfare measures [ibid.:96].

Similarly, Robert Wuetherick focused on compulsory education and the availability of social assistance, as well as decreasing fur prices, as the reasons for "...a disinclination to earn a living from trapping" (1973:A158).

The refutation of this acculturation argument is in the discussion of underdevelopment of bush resources and the post-war deterioration of the fur trade economy. Life in the bush was not inherently difficult or undesirable. It was the imposition of government regulatory systems and the loss of control by Native peoples which resulted in their post-war destitution, which made bush lifeways intolerable. They sought wage-labor and social assistance not because they wanted to leave the bush, but because they badly needed income to replace the income from fur trapping which was no longer adequate to support life anywhere. Then, as young people left the bush, they lost or never learned the skills which would have allowed them to live there. The discussion in this section will show that the move to town was not an instance of acculturation, but rather related to new and often creative solutions to problems relating to livelihood and the stresses associated with bush life.

The Move to Town: An Orderly Process?

The move to town was not a simple process. There is no single year which can be identified as the year when everyone moved from the bush to Fort Chipewyan. Some Natives moved to town in the 1940s, and many more moved during the 1950s and into the 1960s. In the mid 1970s, there were still many people who spent more time in the bush than in town, while others divided their time equally between trapline and town. Some of these "hold-outs" were making decisions, often difficult ones, about leaving the bush, while others were quite content to remain on the trapline. In the late 1970s there was a movement by some park Indians to return to the bush community of Peace Point, as part of the political effort to acquire a reserve. Now, in the mid 1980s, some Chipewyans are considering returning to their reserve in the delta.

At first glance, the residence shift seems to have been a process of great confusion and little regularity. To provide a clearer sense of who moved and why, a series of profiles of various individuals will be drawn. These are composite pictures based on interviews conducted in 1977 and 1978 with Fort Chipewyan residents: the people who moved to town early - during the 1940s, 1950s, and into the 1960s, and the people who moved to town late - in the 1960s and especially the 1970s. It will be shown that the reasons for moving changed over time.

Relocation in the 1940s/50s/60s

Women appear to have been very important actors, often the persons making the decision to leave the bush for town residence. The reasons they give are often idiosyncratic and personal. Men appear to have been attracted to Fort Chipewyan for different reasons, both personal and economic: once their wives had moved to town, the men began to spend more time there. The town was the locus of jobs and information about jobs. Generally, Crees and Métis were more likely to relocate than reserve Chipewyans.

1. Widows were the first category of Native people to move permanently to Fort Chipewyan. Traditionally, Indian widows who had children to support were cared for by their kin groups, and they later remarried, typically to a widower who also had children (cf. AOMI Fort Chipewyan genealogies n.d.; field journals). The availability of assistance from the Indian Agent in Fort Chipewyan gave a widow a new

option: she did not have to remarry, but could move to a cabin in Fort Chipewyan, where she would be provided by the Agent with rations, firewood, and other assistance. She might set a line of snares to catch rabbits or other small game, an activity still possible when Fort Chipewyan was not densely populated (field journal 1977).

Why did some women chose this alternative rather than remarry or continue living with their families in the bush? There are both personal and economic reasons for this decision. One explanation is that some women did not want either a new husband or a new family. In some compound families, step children were considered burdensome and were treated harshly by step-parents (field journals 1977; cf. Landes 1971: 35). Widows who moved to town had only their own children to care for, and many of these were placed in the mission residence. Women living in town enjoyed considerable personal autonomy, although of course they became economically dependent on the Indian Agent.

The other factor was the generally deteriorated bush economy of the 1930s and 1940s. The impoverished resource base made it more difficult for bush communities to support widows, who with their offspring were temporarily "surplus members." Their move to town made sense in terms of the well-being of the local band.

Once the decision was made to move to Fort Chipewyan, few women reconsidered and returned to the bush, even if they subsequently remarried a man from the bush. Whatever the basis of their decision, once made, it was usually permanent.

2. Several women moved to Fort Chipewyan in the 1950s after having lost their mothers and sometimes children while living in the bush. Some of these women explained how lonely and sad the bush had

become for them, although their decision to leave further disrupted the social communities in the bush. These women were able to move to Fort Chipewyan because the Indian Agent provided them with some assistance and their husbands continued to hunt and trap, thereby contributing to their support.

3. Marriages continued to be arranged by parents for their children throughout the 1940s. Some of these were unhappy arrangements, and there was violence by some men against their wives. Some women resolved these difficulties by leaving their husbands and moving to Fort Chipewyan. This alternative was the best one because there was considerable pressure from the Church for couples to stay together and because families may have been reluctant or found it difficult to support their separated daughters or to lose the economic contributions of their sons-in-law. Women's comments about freedom and independence are reminiscent of the reasons some widows gave for leaving the bush. As one woman said about her move to town, "I didn't have no one to growl at me; I was free" (field journal 1977 III:46). These women received some social assistance from the Indian Agent, who often tried to persuade them to return to their husbands (as did the local priest). The marriages themselves continued, and the husbands provided their wives with bush foods on their visits to town.

4. During the 1950s there was considerable labor mobility, with some men seeking employment as far away as the beet fields in southern Alberta or in the mines at the east end of Lake Athabasca. Their families remained in Fort Chipewyan, living in cabins in Doghead and enjoying some support from the Indian Agent. Stewart resisted the idea that he should provide assistance to women whose husbands were working. However, the

men often left for work without leaving food for their families. One account of this situation said that the women got together and pressured the Agent, who finally agreed to provide them with some help (Dixon 1979), thereby increasing total family income. This support was given to the women and contributed to their greater independence within the family unit. The Indian Agent was taking over some of the economic responsibility of the women's husbands, inadvertently undermining the role of the husband in the domestic unit.

5. Earlier chapters explained how moving to town was often the sole escape for families which had lost their park hunting and trapping licences. Their residence in town was temporary, lasting until they could return to the bush. They were assisted by the Indian Agent for that period.

6. Occasionally a family moved to town because the husband had a job there or because he hoped to learn about job possibilities, something which he could not do in the bush. If the job did not materialize or was not successful, the man would often return to the bush, where he could still hunt and trap. His wife and children, however, frequently remained in town.

7. The occupation of Sweetgrass Landing by men working at the mill and their families was detailed in the previous chapter. This community was socially and economically linked to Fort Chipewyan, and there was much travel between them. The steady workers, in particular, appear to have made early commitments to wage labor as a lifestyle and to permanent settlement to enable such employment.

8. Both men and women who had been in hospital for tuberculosis in Edmonton or Fort Smith for lengthy periods of time returned to town.

They received extra rations when they returned (PAA Stewart 16 July 1953; field journal 1977). Sometimes, their domestic arrangements had changed during the long time they were gone. This was an incentive to stay in Fort Chipewyan where they could obtain support from the Indian Agent. While some tuberculosis patients did eventually return to the bush, others remained in Fort Chipewyan; especially if there were employment for them there (field journal 1977 V:67).

9. There were several families which had cabins or houses in town but who used them primarily for storage and as temporary residences for themselves or relatives when they visited. The importance of this is that it points out that people who had houses in town should not necessarily be considered as having left the bush.

10. The Chipewyan were the last group of Natives to relocate to Fort Chipewyan in a process which today (1984) is still not completed and which may yet be reversed. This apparently greater commitment to the bush life may be related to the greater control over their own lives because of their possession of a reserve and the benefits available to them there (housing, social assistance). However, it may also relate to the jobs available to them. While in the park jobs were available on a year-round basis once the mills began operation, and there was also work to be done for the park itself, outside the park, jobs were mainly summer ones, unless the men chose to move to the mines at the east end of the lake. Working for wages in summer may not have been sufficient a disruption of routine to result in a decision to relocate to Fort Chipewyan.

To summarize, the Native peoples who moved to Fort Chipewyan did so for a variety of reasons. The personal desire for increased independence seems to have been especially important for many women who moved to town. Also, they welcomed the additional help provided by the Indian Agent. Life was not easy for these women, even with this help. Many women talked about how difficult it could be to get wood and other necessities in town which were free of charge in the bush. Levels of assistance were minimal. Many of the women worked at the mission in the kitchen or sewing room to earn some money. They took in laundry and did some sewing and housecleaning for other people in town. Nevertheless, women speak with both acceptance and pride about their abilities to earn a living for themselves (field journals 1977 III:74,90; 1977 IV:7,89; 1978: 52,80).

Men whose wives had moved to town began to spend more time in town themselves, bringing food from the bush and occasionally furs for processing, helping with the chores of getting wood and water, and just visiting. Economic reasons for these visits were important to men from the bush communities. They wanted wage labor opportunities, which were available mostly in town, at least until the mill became established, usually through the Indian Agent who did recruiting for most of the industries which operated in the region. Holding jobs allowed the men a measure of continued independence; they were less willing than the women to become directly dependent on the Indian Agent's assistance.

A new type of dual economy had developed, in which men switched between wage labor and trapping as sources of income and in which they continued to utilize bush foods. They took advantage of job opportunities when they were available. Alternatively, they returned to the bush, either temporarily or permanently, where they hunted and trapped. These alternatives were made possible by the fact that families were in town, where they enjoyed at least intermittent support from the Indian Agent. That is, the relocation of women and children to Fort Chipewyan increased the men's freedom of their labor power. The men whose families lived in town were becoming a mobile labor force.

One interesting explanation of the move to town was offered by an older Métis man, who remembered a "Hopalong Cassidy fall," in a year when families had delayed leaving Fort Chipewyan for their traplines in the park in order to see a Hopalong Cassidy movie shown at the mission. They were caught by an early freeze-up, which meant that they were forced to stay in town until the ice became safe enough for travel. This man explained that the men built cabins for their families in Doghead, and when freeze-up was completed, the men went to the bush alone, leaving their families in town (field journal 1977 IV:29). It was easier to move families to the trapline during open water, when boats were used, than after freeze-up, when dog teams were required. By leaving their families behind, the men began trapping sooner than if they had to move everyone to the bush and spend time hunting to feed their families too. The men could become trappers by occupation, in contrast to the trapping lifestyle which it once had been. Instead of using the bush communities as centers from which to move in and out of the traplines, many Natives now used Fort Chipewyan as their base for hunting and trapping as well as employment.

In 1963, both wage labor and trapping were important economically as income sources for the Cree and Chipewyan bands, said Jack Stewart. Trapping accounted for about 30 percent of total income for both bands (Stewart 1965). Men were not "hobby trappers," as suggested in a report by Moncrieff, Montgomery and Associates Ltd. (1971:B112). Other employment contributed an additional 30 percent, for a total of 60 percent of earned income (Stewart 1965). These figures do not include an estimation of the value of production of bush food and other resources, which would have increased the proportion of earned income and reduced the proportion of income from government sources, which Stewart had estimated at 37.5 percent (*ibid*.). This income profile indicates continued self-reliance by local Natives; Fort Chipewyan was far from being the welfare-dominated community which it appeared to others (eg., PAD Symposium 1971:250). The commitment to trapping and bush subsistence activities remained strong. Overall income was very low, even when government assistance and transfer payments were included in the totals.

The large numbers of people who lived in town during the 1950s and 1960s, even as a temporary stay, removed pressure from bush resources. For many, the move to town increased the total family income, though possibly not equivalent to levels of earlier decades. This economic benefit to individual families was at the expense of the social communities in the bush, since the traditional unit of production and consumption consisting of men, women, and children was now divided spatially and fragmented in its liaisons with agents and traders.

As women and families left the bush, the bush social communities deteriorated. The social life moved to a new location on the periphery of Fort Chipewyan, the western edge of town known as "Doghead." The situation seems to have been similar to that of an eastern Native community studied by Jean Trudeau, in which

> ...the settlement replaced the main cabin or camp on the trapline and the Indian trappers became "monthly commuters" between their traplines and the village where their families dwelled...[1966:97].

It was a new social community in that it consisted of many of the women who used to live together in the bush, as well as women who used to live in different localities. One woman recalled that when she lived in the bush, "...I didn't hardly know the other womans, because they were living all different places." She started to get to know them when they all moved to town:

> Fort Chip. is a place where nobody starves. Them days, anybody kill anything, you go and visit and they give you a piece of meat, of fish, anything. So, this is a good little town. People help each other [McCormack 1978].

Mutual assistance became less frequent as the town population grew.

Government Services and Programs

Although the economic climate was an important factor in the decision by people to turn to wage labor and social assistance and to relocate their settlements, what does not seem to have played much part were the various government services and programs which have often been considered critical. In fact, Fort Chipewyan's situation shows that most of these programs were not factors during the period of relocation. The most common services and programs included social assistance, family allowances and education, housing, and medical services.

Social Assistance

Social assistance made it possible for women, in particular, to remain in town. As the discussion above suggests, however, levels of assistance were not sufficient to support the recipients completely. One study concluded that "...welfare support is... generally below lost income levels" in both cash and kind (Phillips and Hetland in PAD Symposium 1971:244). Women in town had to work very hard to support themselves, even when supplied with rations from the Indian Agent. It is significant that only one person explained that she and her husband moved to town "...for the money" (field journal 1977 VI:6-7). But, the husband continued to hunt and trap, and their cabin was at a point of Doghead so distant from the town as to suggest that they attempted to distance themselves from both the town and the Agent.

Rations were available to people still living in the bush communities. Stewart occasionally provisioned trappers who were returning to the bush, and he made other assistance available from time to time. Interestingly, the Chipewyan band requested in 1956 that it be given an allowance rather than a ration list (PAA Stewart 12 June 1956), which suggests that it wanted more control over the allocation of government assistance. Also, because the Chipewyans remained on their reserve and did not move to Fort Chipewyan in great numbers, this tells us that assistance was still available to people who chose to remain in the bush.

Family Allowances Family allowances were designed to increase the spending power of the family by providing some support for children, as well as to force parents to keep their children in school. If a child lived where schooling were provided but was not in school, the allowance was terminated.

The family allowance regulations affected status Indians and Métis/non-status Indians differently. Métis and non-status Indians continued to receive family allowances for children whom they had placed in the mission, because the government did not provide a subsidy for these children. Their families were assumed to be "maintaining" them, although in fact they did not contribute regularly to their support (field journals 1977; 1978). Hence, the family allowance was not an economic incentive for Métis and non-status Indians to move to Fort Chipewyan and keep their own children. On the contrary, they were better off financially if they put the children in the mission and used the money to help finance their bush activities. Another explanation must be found for their move from the bush to town.

Status Indian women, on the other hand, lost the family allowances for children in the mission, because it was assumed that the government and not the family was supporting the child through its system of subsidies to the mission.[1] If family allowances were an important factor in the move of these women to Fort Chipewyan, it would be expected that their children would have been kept at home. In fact, the Indian children continued to be placed in the mission even after their mothers had moved to Fort Chipewyan (Albert and Albert 1979; field journals). Two factors were responsible for this situation. First, an education tradition had developed over the years which meant mission residence for the children. This tradition did not end when women moved to Fort Chipewyan. Children were placed in the mission for "educational" reasons during the 1950s and 1960s and into the 1970s, when the mission was finally closed. Even more important was the economic situation. The family allowance did not balance the cost of supporting a child at home (field journals 1977). It was cheaper to put a child in the mission and give up the family allowance than have the child at home, especially if s/he were too young to be of much help in the house. Stewart encouraged families which were quite poor to put their children in the mission (PAA Stewart 21 Sept. 1955). This leads to the conclusion that at Fort Chipewyan, family allowance was not a compelling reason for Natives to move to Fort Chipewyan. Mathewson drew a similar conclusion: that there was

> ...a considerable time lag between the implementation of policy and resultant native movement to the settle-

> ment. The act was initially unsuccessful, both in attracting children to the school and natives permanently to the settlement [1974:88].

It is curious, then, that so many people in Fort Chipewyan claim that they moved to town so that their children could go to school. This explanation is questionable for two reasons: first, the existence of the mission meant that children could go to school even if the parents remained in the bush. Secondly, even when people moved to town, they continued to place their children in the mission. "Education" may be a socially acceptable explanation about why people changed their residence, not for increased independence, freedom, greater job opportunities, and so forth, but to do something "for the children," which was a strong sentiment in the community. Moving to town so that children could attend school was a motivation that was more prevalent in the 1970s than in the 1950s or the early 1960s.

Housing If housing availability in Fort Chipewyan had been recognized as an important factor in the movement of Natives to the town (cf. Dunning 1962:223), then there might have been housing programs for both Métis/non-status Indians and status Indians in the early 1950s. In fact, programs to provide more housing were a late development in Fort Chipewyan for status Indians, not beginning until 1959, and housing for Métis/non-status Indians was not available until the 1970s.

The housing programs which existed throughout the 1940s and 1950s were to provide housing in the bush, not in town. A house building and repair program had existed in the 1940s and 1950s which was to improve the accommodation for older Indians in the bush communities and help them remain there (field journal 1977 III:29; V:25-26; VI:14-15). A new housing program was begun in the mid 1950s to meet the housing needs of Indians who were sick, aged, or had large families, and who could not undertake the entire cost of repairs or construction. This program led to the construction of the first "treaty houses" on the Chipewyan reserve. Two houses were built in each year from 1958 through 1960 (field journals 1977; various entries PAA Stewart 1958; 1959).

By 1958 it was evident to Stewart that Natives had settled permanently in Fort Chipewyan and that to relieve problems of overcrowding, housing was needed for them. That fall he began to plan a construction program for Fort Chipewyan (PAA Stewart 16 Oct. 1958). In the fall of 1959, he began to build treaty houses, a program which has continued to the present (field journals 1977; PAA Stewart 21 Oct. 1959). The first houses were identical to those on the Chipewyan reserve, though later houses were larger and of better quality. All the people who got these houses lived in town permanently prior to their construction, in cabins in Doghead (field journals 1977; 1978; Dixon 1979; Albert and Albert 1979). Therefore, the availability of treaty houses was not a factor in their initial move.

Mathewson has claimed that people were attracted to the settlement by related government services of telephones, electricity, street lighting, water lines and sewage, and airstrip facilities. She said,

> It is surely no coincidence that a number of natives were attracted to the settlement after these installations, nor coincidence that they moved to the part of the settlement which had these facilities [1974:94].

Her assertion is incorrect. In fact, people remained in their cabins in Doghead, where there was no electricity, street lighting, etc., until a house was provided for them either in Doghead, where a row of treaty houses was erected, or across the bay in the town itself. Moreover, while most (but not all) people who did move into treaty houses had electricity, no one had water or sewage, and few had telephones.

To summarize, the data indicate that people moved to town prior to the housing program for Fort Chipewyan, and at a time when there was a program of housing construction and repair in the bush. Housing in Fort Chipewyan was not an incentive to move to town in this early period, but a solution to deal with the consequent overcrowding of cabins in Doghead by families which had previously left the bush for the settlement.

Medical Care A program of medical care was considered for the town in 1954, when Stewart looked into accommodations at Fort Chipewyan for a resident nurse (PAA Stewart 21 March 1954). The nurse arrived on May 27, 1955 (ibid. 27 May 1955) with his family, and he set up his office in the Indian Affairs office. The man was not a registered nurse, but a registered orderly, with less training in diagnosis and treatment than a registered nurse received. Nevertheless, he initiated a health program which stressed X-raying for tuberculosis and innoculations for diseases in the region (various entries PAA Stewart 1955). He stayed in Fort Chipewyan until August 2, 1957 (ibid. 2 Aug. 1957). He was not replaced until Demember by another male nurse and his family (ibid. 13 Dec. 1957). In 1958, a health center was established (ibid. 3 Dec. 1958), which was replaced in the early 1960s by a regular nursing station (ibid. 15 March 1960).

Medical care was a factor which contributed to the attraction of Fort Chipewyan, especially for women who had lost relatives to diseases or childbirth in the bush, but the services available in the 1950s and 1960s were too minimal to have been of great importance. While these programs did not cause the early move to Fort Chipewyan from the bush, they, along with housing, probably contributed to the permanence and stability of the community and to the irreversibility of the decision to move.

"The Disease of Living in Town": Relocation in the latter 1960s/1970s

The majority of the population from the bush had moved to Fort Chipewyan by the mid 1960s. Those who remained in the bush were a large proportion of the Chipewyan band, some older trappers and their wives, trappers whose families were in Fort Chipewyan, and some younger people who preferred trapping to wage labor. However, many of them began to move to town in the latter part of the 1960s and in the 1970s. The availability of housing, services, and the deterioration of the bush social communities were determining factors in their decisions to relocate. The variety of reasons people moved to Fort Chipewyan is discussed here.

1. As in the earlier period, widows relocated to Fort Chipewyan. However, because their children were likely to have moved to Fort Chipewyan earlier, women who were widowed in this later period may not have had the option of remaining in the bush, since there may have been no one there with whom they could live (field journal 1977 V:3).

2. Several couples who used to live permanently in the bush moved to Fort Chipewyan to care for children who were in school. They accepted the necessity of education for their children and grandchildren. When the residence closed in the 1970s, they had few options except to move or to board their children with other families, which was an uncommon practice (field journals 1977 V:5; 1978 VIII:11). At least one couple has resisted efforts to have them send their children to school, however.

3. Some couples and individuals moved to town either temporarily or permanently because of medical services. For instance, one woman has a young son who required medical attention (field journal 1977 IV:84). More commonly, it was older couples who had continued to lead traditional lifestyles in the bush until one member needed assistance. In former times, there would have been a large social community to look after people who were sick or ageing. Most of these communities disappeared when people moved to town in the 1950s, and so if help were needed, they were forced to move to Fort Chipewyan (field journal 1978 VIII:25,37). Few, if any, of these individuals or couples wish to remain in town; they express fears about losing their autonomy and ability to look after themselves.

4. Families who used to work at the mill and who lived permanently at Sweetgrass Landing relocated to Fort Chipewyan when employment ended when the operation was terminated (cf. chapter 7; field journal 1977 IV:57).

5. Some families who had settled in Fort Chipewyan in an earlier period later chose (after the summer of 1978) to leave the town and relocate to Peace Point, a location claimed as part of the Cree band land entitlement under Treaty 8. What appears to be a reversal of the "trend" to move to town is not one, however, in that these people have not elected to return to the land in a completely traditional sense. They want Peace Point developed as a serviced townsite with good access to both trapping areas and employment opportunities. Other families from the Chipewyan reserve who obtained houses in town and spent varying amoutns of time there are now talking about moving back to the reserve permanently.

6. As late as 1977-78, there were still families which continued to live in the bush or divided their time equally between bush and town. Many of them were members of the Chipewyan band, and their settlements are located on their reserve. The Chipewyans are the only group in the bush which enjoys a true social community as a viable unit, with the possible exception of the people at Peace Point, now that people are living there. The other families which live in the bush lead more solitary lives.

7. Finally, there are still families where the wife and children live in town, but the husband spends much of his time in the bush.

This diverse data suggest that in this later period, many people decided to move to Fort Chipewyan for the services available there. Nevertheless, it does not seem correct to interpret this situation as an instance of acculturation, of people wanting to "modernize" their lifestyles. On the contrary, many of these people preferred to remain in the bush, despite the difficulties which are today associated with a bush life. Trapping had improved during this period because most of the former trappers had left the bush and trapped only seasonally rather than full time. Also, prices for furs improved substantially in 1973. However, the deterioration of the bush social communities made it difficult for persons who needed assistance to stay in the bush, because there may have been no one there to care for them. The closing of the mission residence meant that people who might otherwise have stayed in the bush moved to Fort Chipewyan to care for their school-age children. This situation does not suggest one in which people were actively seeking out a new life in Fort Chipewyan, but rather one of often reluctant relocation. This conclusion is supported by the uneasiness expressed by some persons about life in Fort Chipewyan. One woman who moved to town in the mid 1970s talked about "the disease of living in town," by which she meant that "you get spoiled," in the sense of getting lazy, since jobs were done for her that she used to have to do for herself, especially hauling water and cutting wood. A person doesn't even have to walk in Fort Chipewyan, she said, but can take taxis everywhere (field journal 1977 V:3-4). Although life in town might be easier in some ways, people have far less control over their lives then in the bush, a situation which many view as highly undesirable.

Summary

The picture which emerges is one of a regional social community based in several bush localities which shifted its locus to Fort Chipewyan, but which retained strong ties to the land as a source of income through trapping and as a source of subsistence foods and other products (hides, wood). It was not a situation in which Native peoples moved to Fort Chipewyan to emulate non-Natives or to "acculturate" to another culture. Instead, they were trying to cope with an economy in which furs had become less valuable, but with no satisfactory employment discovered locally to replace trapping as a source of income. The decisions which led people to move to town were efforts to reconcile the various possibilities, which could be used only from a permanent base in Fort Chipewyan (or Sweetgrass Landing) and through abandoning the fur trade mode of production and its associated lifestyle.

A PROLETARIANIZED MODE OF PRODUCTION

The economic events which have been discussed undermined the integrity of the local bands and even of the family units. There were no longer sufficient bush resources or adequate fur prices to support all members of the bands, while at the same time job opportunities were limited, and social assistance was minimal and not available to all. The basis for economic security had shifted from the local bands to government agents and to local industries, which were unreliable in terms of the support they provided. These new dependencies fragmented traditional band and family loyalties.

The difficulty in describing the new mode of production which replaced the former fur trade mode of production for Native peoples of the region lies in trying to reconcile the myriad of individual decisions about livelihood with some overall societal strategy for material reproduction. O'Laughlin has cautioned that a synchronic picture misrepresents the dynamic quality of a mode of production, in that

> Structural regularities are always processual and should be conceptualized as such in understanding any particular concrete historical situation [1975:345].

The new mode of production which developed at Fort Chipewyan provides for oscillation between the possibilities offered by the transformed bush subsistence or "traditional" sector and a "modern" sector defined by wage labor and social assistance. At the same time, it indicates the interpenetration of these two sectors. Both were necessary components of a proletarianized mode of production, because of cultural values about the bush life and bush products, but even more so because of the inadequacy of the wage labor which was available, in rates of pay, length of employment, and number of jobs.

The "Traditional" Sector

This sector was similar in its forces of production to that of the fur trade mode of production. People resorted to traditional fur and game resources, using exploitative technology which was usually purchased from the local stores. However, the knowledge necessary to hunt and trap was restricted mostly to older men, as younger men and women left the bush with their families. To the extent to which that knowledge was lost, some individuals would be forced out of this sector; hunting and trapping would no longer be possible options for them. The division of labor had changed along similar lines: trapping and hunting became the pursuit of ageing men and some younger men, rather than of all the men of the society. Other men occasionally hunted and trapped "recreationally" or as an economic supplement, especially for waterfowl in the fall and muskrats in the spring "holiday" season. Few women remained in the bush to perform domestic tasks or assist in the preparation of furs, so men had to do these chores themselves unless they were close enough to town to return easily. In terms of the local economy, the food which these men produced was as important or more important than the furs they produced.

Relations of production in this sector had shifted significantly. Neither individuals nor the bands controlled the resources which they utilized. That control was vested in federal and provincial agencies, who granted hunting and trapping "privileges" to Natives and imposed restrictions on where and when people could hunt and trap. Within the Native community, relations among people who had formerly pooled their production and shared the benefits were now individualized. Meat, fish, and hides were now shared only within a small circle of kin and close friends. If others wanted these products, they had to purchase them. Bush production had become commoditized. Income from trapping was not shared automatically, unless it was converted into store foods, more commonly by men with families than by younger men without domestic responsibilities (cf. Asch 1977:56).

The "Modern" Sector

The forces of production in this sector were related to the organization of industry in the region. Traditional resources such as fish, lumber, and bison became marketable. The technology required to exploit them involved facilities which were beyond the individual or even collective financial capacities of impoverished trappers: items such as refrigerator barges and abattoirs, for example. The division of labor represented a two class structure, comprising a marginal managerial class, which acted on behalf of the owners and was always non-Native, and a laboring class, which included the Natives resident in the region who found jobs with these industries (cf. Dunning 1959). This structure was cross-cut by gender differences: all managers and most workers were men. It was men, especially younger ones, who did the actual harvesting or exploiting of the resources: they did the fishing, cut the lumber and worked in the sawmill, and assisted with hunting and butchering of bison. They also worked on construction projects, such as building roads and houses. Women worked for wages in processing fish and in cooking and clearing in the lumber camps and sometimes for the park in its various operations. Women also provided labor which was not reimbursed through their domestic activities: they continued to provide most of the domestic labor (cooking, cleaning, sewing, childcare) which contributed to the reproduction of the labor force.

The relations of production were those of industrial capitalism, in which control over marketable resources and ownership of exploitative technology were vested in one class and their local representatives, which employed members of the other class, the local Natives, to work for them for wages. Natives were always workers or part of the reserve labor force, if they chose to seek such employment for livelihood. They were not managers, administrators, planners, or advisors.

Interrelationships

These two sectors interlocked: "traditional" activities were very important in the local economy. Those individuals who focused their livelihood in the traditional sector supported themselves by the production of use-value and exchange-value, both furs and foods. They used the income to capitalize their bush activities.

Their activities in the bush were also important to those people who were employed by industry or who resorted to social assistance, whose incomes were too low to allow them to reproduce themselves without deterioration in their standards of nutrition and clothing. The cash/labor costs of wild meat and fish were less than their store equivalents. The fact that people could and did utilize wild foods, whether they obtained them directly or through trade with others meant that wages could remain lower than would otherwise have been required. So even people who worked for industry or who relied on social assistance did some hunting and trapping on an occasional basis and /or purchased bush foods when they were available. They were bearing part of their own reproductive costs, rather than industry or government being forced to bear the entire costs of reproducing the labor force.

Conversely, outside sources of income were required by most people to allow them to go to the bush to trap and hunt. They were no longer able to capitalize their bush activities out of their former season's production or their reputations as trappers. Credit was less available to trappers. The fact that wage-earners wanted to purchase bush foods contributed to the ability of some men to stay out of the labor force and continue more traditional pursuits.

Despite the interdependence which this overall mode of production entailed, individual strategies were not committed to community improvement *per se*. Economic and social differentiation developed as some families enjoyed greater incomes than others. Families who were better off economically invested their money in consumer goods such as hunting equipment, home furnishings, and various luxury goods. Their comparative affluence allowed them to spend time in the bush if they desired. People living in Fort Chipewyan who were less well off could spend time in the bush only if they pooled their resources in informal partnerships. However, those people who were truly committed to the traditional sector and the bush life were poor in material terms: they were willing to accept a lower standard of living in this sense in exchange for the comparative freedom of the bush life.

Summary

This is a picture of a complex mode of production involving both "traditional" and "modern" productive enterprises as integral components of a system of material reproduction. The possibilities for individuals related to the fragmentation of traditional social relations and new outside agents who controlled the means of production either through direct ownership or through the regulatory powers of their agency. People did not choose one sector over the other, but usually tried to balance the benefits and problems of each. It was the new regional division of labor and the movement of families to Fort

Chipewyan which enabled people to cope with conflicts of scheduling which trapping and wage labor presented. People purchased food rather than spending much of the summer and fall putting up bush foods for winter. Social assistance meant that some of the costs were looked after by government programs. Men were free to concentrate on trapping or to seek out jobs, depending on what they perceived to be more beneficial. Women could pursue their own individualistic strategies, freed of some of their dependence on their husbands' hunting, trapping, and labor activities.

Was it possible for Natives to cling to the fur trade mode of production and not become involved in this new mode of production? Certainly there continued to be people who were "hold-outs," in that they were not willing to shift their residence to town and orient themselves to a wage labor economy, although they were willing, as before, to work for wages occasionally, and they were also willing to sell bush products to town dwellers. But, this choice became more difficult for the following reasons: first and most importantly, the social communities which were once located throughout the bush disappeared. Therefore, people who lived in the bush were alone and had to consider moving to town to care for the aged and sick.

Another factor was that children attended school, which restricted family mobility because there was no longer a mission residence in town. Hence, most regular bush residents today are older couples or men. Also, children were in a school with a southern curriculum; they were not taught northern bush skills, and these skills became devalued in their eyes. Not only did they not learn the skills which would allow them to hunt and trap, their aspirations were very different from those of their grandparents and parents. Many today want to be something other than trappers or trappers' wives, and many young people are now leaving Fort Chipewyan to take advantage of job and educational opportunities in other centers.

Finally, the resource base became degraded, and government policies did not support trappers and subsistence hunters. The older people who lived in the bush often could not afford the technology for bush travel, and there were complaints about younger men who cleaned muskrats out of sloughs before the older men could get to share the harvest. However, economic support from social assistance and the job situation has improved; people do not require bush food as they once did, although it is still desired.

In other words, the new mode of production is proletarianized in that it is heavily oriented to wage labor, yet involves a continued reliance on bush production. There is no indication that people in Fort Chipewyan are willing to give up trapping and hunting in favor of a total reliance on wage labor, which is not a reliable, long term source of livelihood. Yet unless there is a concerted commitment to a renewed fur trade, trapping will remain a sometime occupation for many men, with few men engaged in full time hunting and trapping as the focus of their economic activities. The proletarianized mode of production is, therefore, a combination of activities which link together the traditional and modern sectors of the economy.

CONCLUSION

The move to town involved many individual decisions which represented efforts by Natives to take advantage of any and all opportunities, yet retain as much control as possible over their situations.

People made deliberate choices which resulted in the transformation of both the forces and especially the relations of production in order to overcome the tremendous economic difficulties they faced in the 1940s and 1950s. Accompanying this shift in mode of production were (1) a partial to complete separation from the means of production, (2) the commoditization of bush production, (3) the individualization of relations of production, and (4) the consequent splintering of the Fort Chipewyan population into small and shifting factions based on kinship, residence, friendship, common interests, and economic and political ties with various agents representing outside interests. However, their efforts to lobby for increased local control over resources and industry indicates that they had not yet abandoned the communal aspects of their former mode of production; these, too, were integral parts of the new mode of production and continued to be sources of conflict in the new economy and society which developed in the region as people left the bush and moved to Fort Chipewyan.

NOTE

[1] It is not clear from the evidence available whether or not they continued to receive the payments if they lived in the bush and kept their children at home.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

The goal of this ethnohistorical study was to describe and to account for the changes in social formation leading to Native powerlessness and impoverishment in the Fort Chipewyan region after World War II. This concluding chapter repeats the theoretical arguments and indicates the relevant oral and documentary data.

Two complementary perspectives were used in the analysis: the paradigm of the world capitalist system and the conceptual configuration of a social formation which is predicated on more than one mode of production. They jointly provide the analytical structures for explaining the cultural, economic, political, and social changes which occurred in the region.

The paradigm of the world capitalist system presumes that isolated Native groups such as those in the Fort Chipewyan region played a role in the internationalization of production and division of labor, once they had begun to produce commodities and to engage in trade for European manufactures on a regular basis, especially manufactures which became necessary for material production. Their role was peripheral, and they were powerless in regard to the elaboration of capitalist structures in the core regions, which held economic and political power. The expansion and modernization of capitalism led the core regions to impose new economic and political imperatives on their peripheries, which in turn altered their productive activities, although not always in the direction anticipated by the decision-makers in the cores.

This study traces those aspects of the development of the world capitalist system which affected the Fort Chipewyan region, as illustrated in table 1. The contact history of the region can be partitioned into two broad stages: the region as an external arena and then as a periphery, which may be divided into three general periods: (1) the preeminence of mercantilism and the fur trade, (2) the undermining of mercantilism by developed or industrial capital, and (3) the preeminence of developed capitalism and northern exploitative industries in the primary sector. The political-territorial entity of the Canadian nation-state and its provincial offshoots were important in that they established conditions which facilitated the reproduction, expansion, and development of capitalism; that is, they operated in the interests of those groups which controlled the nation's political economy rather than of those groups resident in the periphery, the Native peoples.

The incorporation of the Fort Chipewyan region into the world capitalist system and its subsequent history as a periphery were influenced by a number of factors which the study examined through the concept of social formation. A social formation is a system of social relations predicated on an economic base defined by one or more modes of material reproduction (the physical and social arrangements of resources, technology, and people by which the necessities of life are produced and circulated) and by those jural, political, and ideological relations which allow for the reproduction of the relations of production.

The social formation of the Fort Chipewyan region is based on an historically complex plural society composed of several ethnically and culturally distinct groups of Native and European peoples. The aboriginal Beaver Indians were driven out of the region and replaced by

Cree and Chipewyan Indians. There were two groups of French Métis, one of which entered the region with the fur trade, and the other relocated to the region from Lac La Biche in the 1920s. There were Scots Métis, who sometimes considered themselves Europeans. Finally, there were Europeans and Euro-Canadians.

Natives and Europeans entered the contact situation with distinctive modes of production (domestic or aboriginal and mercantilist, respectively) which influenced their subsequent interaction. The development of the social formation and its modes of production and superstructural elements entailed a dialectical process of interaction among individuals and groups with very different goals, understandings, and strategies for material and social reproduction. Hence, the historic period was characterized by tensions, conflicts, and contradictions among the members of this composite society, and by the transformation of modes of production to accommodate both the local situation and external factors. Native and European peoples made individual and collective decisions about their own activities and those of the other co-resident groups, within a framework of a developing capitalist system.

O'Laughlin has pointed out a conceptual problem in the use of the concepts of mode of production and superstructure:

> The concept of a mode of production is used both to define conceptually a particular dialectical (and therefore dynamic) unity of forces and relations of production and, at a different level of abstraction, to delimit a period of history dominated by a particular mode of production. At this second level we may choose to distinguish certain periods or stages of development of the mode of production [1975:359].

This study has shown the dynamic aspects of the concept, particularly the roles played by individuals in making decisions about how they wish to live their lives and provide for themselves and their families. On another analytical level, it is suggested that individual decisions are made within a range of possibilities, conditioned by structural factors which lead to members of a society making similar or compatible choices about reproductive strategies. Individual decisions therefore appear as society's decisions about mode of production, and at intervals these social strategies are qualitatively distinctive enough that the social history can be divided into stages of development of the social formation.

The study developed the idea of four broad stages in the development of the social formation of the post-contact Fort Chipewyan region. Each stage corresponds to both the development of capitalism as it affected the region and to changes in Native modes of production and lifestyle. They are related inversely: as capitalism developed, it undermined pre-capitalist social formations and modes of production. Each stage corresponds to a situation of increasing Native subordination to and dependence on European agents, government, and business enterprises. The introduction and development of capitalism in the region, although affected by traditional Native modes of production, resulted in the initiation of a process of underdevelopment which itself changed over time and which resulted in the creation of the conditions of powerlessness and poverty which this study attempted to explain. The main features of these stages are summarized below and in table 1.

FORT CHIPEWYAN AS EXTERNAL ARENA 1682-1821

The expansion of European industry and trade networks brought English, Scots, and French merchants to the west coast of Hudson Bay and the western interior in 1682 and later. They traded European manufactures, which were desirable but not essential to the Cree and Chipewyan Indians, for furs and food provisions. Indians also "sold" their labor, for payment in kind, to the traders. This early trade resulted in Cree and Chipewyan expansion into the interior and the creation of the Canadian Métis population. Until 1821, there was intermittent competition between trading companies, much of which was concentrated in the Fort Chipewyan region. Therefore, Natives often had easy access to trade goods without committing themselves to regular trapping.

This post-contact, pre-dependence state lasted for neraly 150 years; the region was "external" to the world capitalist system, though engaged in irregular trade with agents of mercantile institutions. It was not until the establishment of the HBC trade monopoly in 1821 that the traders were able to introduce measures designed to force Natives to produce commodities - furs - on a reliable basis in exchange for European commodities. This new relationship was achieved in the second quarter of the 19th century in the Fort Chipewyan region. It marked the shift of the region from an external arena to an integral part of the world capitalist system as both market and commodity producer.

FORT CHIPEWYAN AS PERIPHERY 1821-1965

The Preeminence of Mercantilism and the Fur Trade 1821-1870

Mercantile capitalists make their profits through unequal exchange in their transactions, rather than by intervening directly in the manufacturing or productive process. The early merchant companies, including the HBC, were autonomous and profited from trade with both European industrialists and Native producers. In the Fort Chipewyan region the HBC traders encouraged regular fur trapping and the consumption of trade goods by Natives. They hired Natives as post "servants," but they did not interfere with other aspects of Native lifestyle. Natives who chose to remain in the region as fur producers or as fur trade employees, or both, made their own decisions about strategies of material reproduction. This resulted in a new "fur trade" mode of reproduction.

Both Indians and Métis continued to produce subsistence items for their own use - food, hides, wood, bone. They also produced commodities - furs and food provisions - and sold their labor to the traders when they worked in the service sector, which gave them exchange credits to purchase technological items which had become essential for production, especially guns, metal tools, and clothing, as well as luxury goods. Their labor in the service sector contributed to the reduction of overhead costs of trading and allowed the traders to increase the amount of surplus value which they appropriated through the exchange process. "Wage labor" and bush subsistence and trapping activities were different modalities of one encompassing mode of production, one which involved Natives in the capitalist system, yet continued their reliance on bush subsistence products. Indians tended to focus on trapping, and Métis on wage labor as their major source of income, yet neither occupation was exclusively Indian or Métis. There was considerable flexibility and interdependence of activities. Ethnicity tended to follow occupation.

These new strategies were accompanied by changes in the relations of production. The HBC traders, who were the agents between the Natives and the world market, stimulated fur production and set many of the rules for trade, thereby becoming part of the local social arrangements for production. The Native groups in the bush became small, localized bands, with some individual control over trapping territories, especially for beaver. Those Métis who lived in Fort Chipewyan were often related to and interacted with Indians in hunting, trapping, and wage labor. These changes were accompanied by a dialectical conflict between communal and individual interests, in that production of furs for exchange and wage labor were individual activities. However, band leaders or "headmen" still spoke in common for members of their bands. As long as there were ample resources, and most income was used to purchase items which benefited all members of the local band, this contradiction did not constitute a major problem.

Underdevelopment began during this period, because the capital which was created by fur production was not reinvested locally except to expand the European side of the trade network. Moreover, Native peoples became dependent on many European manufactures which replaced a large portion of their technological inventory. Dependency on manufactured items meant also dependence on the people who controlled their availability.

Mercantilism Undermined 1870-1948

Fur traders and their system of mercantilism were the only links between Native people and the outside capitalist system until the region was sold, along with the rest of the HBC territories, to the Dominion of Canada in 1870. That date represents the beginning of the expansion of the capitalist political economy of the new Canadian nation-state which sought to increase revenue from the exploitation of a range of non-fur staples and to develop Canadian manufacturing industries. Canada began to intervene directly in the productive process of the region through its support of entrepreneurial ventures and through its actions to alienate Native peoples from their resources (land base) through legislation, regulation, treaty and scrip parties.

Simultaneously, mercantile operations were being absorbed by industrial capitalists as part of the process of vertical integration of operations. Merchants became subordinate to the industrialists, and they could no longer make profits from the European or Canadian end of their exchange network. They had to seek additional income from the fur producers and others in the region in order to maintain their former levels of income and profit. They encouraged the increase of fur production in the north, which reduced the number of fur bearing and game animals and destabilized the trade. They cut costs by modernizing their operations, which changed the conditions of employment for Natives, especially Métis, who were thrown into competition with Indians for subsistence in a diminishing resource base.

These efforts by government and business affected the region almost immediately, although minimally, until World War I. There was new competition among traders for fur. Native use of the land began to be regulated by federal game regulations even before they signed Treaty 8 (Indians) or took scrip (Métis) in 1899. Federal and provincial government agents (after 1905) increased in numbers and began to enforce federal and provincial regulations restricting hunting, trapping, and the use of fire. Although relatively powerless, they nevertheless established structures of regulation, supervision, and control which facilitated more state and business activity in the region after World War I.

1918 was the last year in which Native peoples of the region could be described as being politically autonomous and relatively un-hindered in their access to the resources of the land. The three decades which followed the first world war, 1918 to 1948, saw an influx of trappers, miners, and other entrepreneurs from outside into and through the region in search of profitable resources and activities, many of which would be in direct competition with Native land use. They were supported and encouraged by the expansion of federal and provincial regulatory systems which interfered with traditional Native activities and allowed non-Natives access to and control over both fur and food resources and new non-fur resources, especially mineral deposits. These years saw the beginning of a new form of underdevelopment: revenues were still leaving the region, as before, but now the land base was itself threatened through processes of land alienation, regulation, and resource degradation.

The Native fur trade mode of production persisted nevertheless, but with Native peoples facing new and often devastating economic and political difficulties. They were forced to compete for diminishing resources with outsiders as well as with each other. They were forced to rely on aid provided by government agents, especially the Indian Agent, which undermined the autonomy of the local band leaders. This situation aggravated the tension between individual and communal aspects of the fur trade mode of production. Moreover, by the end of this period, individuals were finding it difficult to provide themselves with sufficient cash income or exchange value to support their bush activities, and the resources in the bush were in many instances so severely depleted that they would not provide enough fur or food for livelihood. It was at this point that Native peoples began to seek out wage labor, in an effort to allow them to continue their bush lives.

The Preeminence of Industrial Capitalism and Northern Exploitative Industries 1948-1965

The structure of capitalism in Canada continued developing during World War II and the post-war period, which saw industries expand their markets into northern Canada and seek new sources of raw materials there. The federal and provincial governments supported this expansion, as they had earlier, although they now played a considerably more active role through direct involvement in business ventures in the Fort Chipewyan region and through support for such ventures by policies which encouraged Native peoples to leave the land, to educate their children, and to become a northern labor force. However, Natives resisted efforts to remove them from the land completely, and the regional industries could not support them adequately.

They adopted a new strategy of material reproduction which emphasized wage labor and social assistance which I call a "proletarianized" mode of production. But, Natives did not become a true proletariat, despite government efforts to force them to do so. A strong bush orientation persisted as part of this new mode of production, because people wanted and needed bush products, because of their cultural values and especially because of low wages and inadequate social assistance. Hunting and trapping activities had to be financed now from cash income newly available to people through industry or government agents.

The new mode of production was paralleled by the transformation of lifestyle, particularly the abandonment of the bush communities by virtually all families, and their moving into town. So while government anticipated that Natives would become a labor force and viewed this move as support for its belief that Natives had chosen this lifestyle, in fact what happened was that Natives retained strong ties to the land

and rejected a commitment to wage labor. As Brody has pointed out, even high income levels do not necessarily indicate that the traditional relationships to the subsistence base have been wholly changed. Rather, industrial work can be interpreted, as it has been for the Fort Chipewyan region, as a sign that both the traditional economy and the "modern" industries are instable and insecure (Brody 1977:43). Part of this insecurity came from the disruption of the Native social communities: the shift to reliance on new sources of income emphasized individual strategies of survival as opposed to the traditional communal strategies used in the bush. Individualistic strategies were supported by the various agents who hired workers and dispensed assistance.

The economic dualism which characterized the region after World War II did not create true development, but merely economic growth which benefited outside owners or management and contributed to the regional underdevelopment, impoverishment, and movement of the traditional Native societies. The social fabric has been drastically altered. The stage is now set for the movement of members of the regional social community to the outside society, for the development of new social forms, and for a new set of contradictions and conflicts characteristic of the developed class-capitalism which has established itself firmly in the region.

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APPENDIX 1

EXCERPTS FROM JACK STEWART'S DAILY JOURNAL: JUNE 5, 1944 - MAY 17, 1945

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND JOB CREATION

1944

June 14	Cree Chief John Cowie and J B Gibbot Headman in to talk over matter re destitutes.
July 4	The Cree Chief and his two Headmen were in. They were told to round up the young men and find out if any would go to work in the Harvest fields in southern Alberta.
July 6	18 Indian[s] from Cree and Chip Bands put in their names as willing to go to work in the harvest fields of Southern Alberta. This would be a good experience for these young men.
September 5	Chief Jonas Laviolette and Headman Benj. Marcel were in to inquire about aid for some destitute Indians Quite a few others around for their monthly ration
September 15	K Woods ration issuer for reserves No 201F and 201G reported Indians were complaining of not receiving rations and I left a note with him explaining to them the difficulty we had to [get] the Transportation Cos. to take them.
October 12	H. M. Napoleon Marten called in today. He is taking rations for old people under his care.
November 13	Father Picard called in today and reported a case of illness. As this man Baptiste Ratfat is not receiving proper care where he is we will have him brought into the settlement providing a home where he can be attended to by Sister Chafleur RN
November 14	Rented a house today for Baptiste Ratfat who is sick.
November 17	Ed. Flett and Fred Wittago moved B. Ratfat and fam. into settlement.
December 3	Chief John Cowie was in today and reports that fur in the Wood Buffalo Park is none to [sic] plentiful. I asked him to tell the people there that instead of them coming to Chipewyan settlement with Empty sleighs that they should put on a load of Buffalo meat and that they would be paid at the rate of 2¢ per lb.

December 7 Joseph Rubuska was in asking that Dept. would provide for him. He says that he is unable to [do] any work Ed. Flett left for Point Brule with 300 lbs. Bacon that should have been delivered by HBCo Transport last summer. Instead it was hauled up and down the river and finally delivered back here

1945

January 9 Sister Chapleau RN. asked that a house be rented for Mrs Wm Simpson for 6 weeks at least. This woman is ill and needs a 6 weeks treatment.

January 10 Request from Fond du Lac asking to send Mrs. Benjamin Adam to hospital.

January 12 Chief John Cowie was in today and reported he had hauled the Buffalo Meat to his cabin and had distributed some to the needy

January 18 Paid a visit to some destitute Indians in the settlement and also to the Holy Angels Residential School

January 21 Paid a visit HM J B Gibot's and Joseph Martins cabin about 2-1/2 miles distant. These men were complaining of hardship no fur in the country, also Joseph Martin says he is sick. Advised him to go and see the Sister nurse. In afternoon visited all the people at Baril Creek and gave relief to Dool Dool Bouchier an old man in form of 1 suit underwear, 1 axe and 1 file. Others were told to hunt squirrels as these were plentiful and price fair.

March 4 Chief John Cowie called in today to inform me that 3 families at Baril Creek were very destitute.

March 14 Mrs. Nap. Laviolette informed me today owing to her poor health she would be unable to care for Widow Alex Laviolette No 1 Chipewyan Band but agreed to try [to] care for her until March 31st.

March 26 H. M. Napoleon Martin in Issued 4 rations

April 9 Paid a visit to some destitute Indians living in the villiage [sic].

April 18 Sent Edward Flett over to Reserve no 201 to find out if Benjamin and Fredoline Marcel would go on a survey job at Yellowknife.

April 24 Making arrangements for buriel [sic] of Alex Watzaga (Blind and Destitute) who died last night

April 28 Writing out family allowance forms. [Also May 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10]

May 6 Whooping cough epidemic in school. Sister Deslaurier, Principal, had to ask permission from Dept [i.e., Stewart] to close school.

MEDIATOR AND INFORMATION BROKER

1944

August 9 Made a trip to Reserve 201 re Traplines

September 2 Had Amap Wanderspirit in today to explain the trapping grounds of the whole family.

September 6 Paid a visit to R.C.M.P. to find out which Indians are to be prosecuted for trespass in Wood Buffalo Park

September 11 Went to trial Joseph Wanderingspirit tried for entering Wood Buffalo Park without a permit

September 13 [On a trip to Reserve No. 201F] Met J Sutter Game Guardian on River and had a talk about traplines settling a few questions to our mutual satisfaction.

September 14 7 AM. called at Napoleon Martins (Headman) Cree band cabin. I asked him to talk to his people about Trapping areas in the Park and to find out if any would move to another part of Park.

September 21 [A meeting in McMurray with officials] We had a long talk about the trapline situation in the different areas. I must say these Rangers were very willing to co-operate in certain suggestions put forward by Mr. Grew. such as having Indians in areas by themselves

November 17 Paid a visit to Corporal Busler R.C.M.P. to find out about some registered trapline areas.

December 9 Had Benjamin Marcel H.M. and Pierre Adam were in today This Pierre Adam has tangled with the game laws having killed 2 rats last fall. He say[s] he killed them for food.

December 17 J Sutter Game Guardian from Embarras Portage paid me a visit today.

December 19 J Sutter laying charge against Pierre Adam (Reserve No. 201) for killing rats out of season.

December 27 [Report of an old Indian being taken advantage of by a HBC post manager in the Park. Stewart got the Fort Chipewyan manager to promise to investigate.]

1945

January 4	Attended court most of day. Pierre Adam from reserve No 201 was tried on two charges. One killing rats out of season fined 25^{oo} and the other charge was hunting on a registered area other than his own. This case was dismissed. Pierre then laid a charge against a white man for unlawful seisure [sic] of his 22 rifle. This man was sentenced to 1 month.
January 8	Napoleon Martin H.M. reported that the Indians in the South East corner of Wood Buffalo Park wished a [sic] area to be given to them there for trapping that is if the Park was to be divided up into areas.
February 14	Attended trial of two Indians charged with vagrancy. They were fined 20.00 each
February 18	Called on MJ Dempsey [Park Warden]...and talked over matters concerning Indians in Wood Buffalo park
February 19	Called at Govt officies and had a talk with Mr Gibson and MJ Dempsey about old people being permitted to have their sons kill beaver for them
February 20	Called on all Fur Traders at this Point [Fort Fitzgerald] also the Game Guardian.
March 5	Attended the trial of an Indian Youth for Stealing Fish the charge laid by the RC Mission.
March 16	Attended trial of two young Indians (brothers) for not having lifted their traps before closed season
March 19	Busy preparing list of trap-line registrations requested by E. S. Huestis Game Commissioner [Alberta].
March 27	Left Camp 6 AM. continued upstream to Reserve No 201F Only two aged couples at home but left word for all the hunters not to hunt beaver until they were sure they would be open.
April 3	Meetings have been held here in Chipewyan by trappers trying to form a trappers union. Advised Indiasn not to join anything like this especially when they informed me who was head of it.
May 15	Tracing traplines on maps. [Also May 16, 17]

[PAA Stewart 1944; 1945]

APPENDIX 2

FISHING LICENCE 1948

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS that pursuant to an order of His Excellency, the Governor General in Council, P.C. 1516 of 13th April, 1948, I, JAMES ALLISON GLEN, Minister of Mines and Resources, do hereby in consideration of the sum of One ($1.00) Dollar now paid to me for the use of His Majesty and in consideration of the royalty hereinafter mentioned, give unto McInnes Products Corporation Limited (hereinafter called the Licensee) its successors and assigns, full right, power and licence, subject to the conditions hereinafter mentioned and contained, to take from the waters of Lake Claire, Wood Buffalo National Park, Alberta,

(a) Goldeye (Amphiodon alosoides Rafinesque) up to an amount of 250,000 pounds round weight during the year 1948, and

(b) Such other numbers and species of fish which may be taken during fishing operations carried on for the purpose of taking such Goldeye.

This licence is subject to the following conditions and restrictions: -

1. Fishing operations shall be conducted only during the period June 1st to July 15th, 1948, both dates inclusive.

2. If for any reason it becomes necessary to restrict the period during which fishing may be carried on or to reduce the weight of fish taken, the Minister may reduce the weight of fish to be taken or limit the period of time during which such fish may be taken.

3. The Licensee shall not use any net less than three and

three quarter inches stretched mesh.

4. Fish of species other than Goldeye and Whitefish, which are taken by the Licensee in its fishing operations, shall be made available to such Indians and half-breeds as are named by the Superintendent of the Park, and the amount of such fish required for the Government dog camp at Lake Mamawi shall be delivered to the camp by the Licensee at its expense.

5. All fishing operations of the Licensee shall be carried on in conformity with the requirements of the Fish Inspection Act and regulations made thereunder and all operations shall be subject to investigation by a representative of the Fisheries Research Board, the Department of Fisheries and the Superintendent of the Park.

6. Records of the daily catch and total catch of all species of fish caught in the area covered by this licence and gross receipts from the sale of such fish shall be kept and made available to the Minister of Mines and Resources.

7. The Superintendent of the Park shall locate sites for all shore camps required by the Licensee and its employees.

8. The Licensee and its employees shall observe at all times the Park Regulations and all Regulations and orders made by the Superintendent of the Park for the protection of the forests from fire.

9. The Licensee shall employ such Indians and half-breeds in its fishing operations at Lake Claire so that at least seventy-five per cent of the money paid out for wages or salaries to labourers in such operations shall be paid to Indians and half-breeds.

10. A royalty of five per cent of the gross receipts of the Licensee from the sale of all commercial species of fish, taken from Lake Claire, shall be paid to the Minister.

11. The Licensee shall employ for a period of at least one week prior to the commencement of actual fishing operations all Indians and half-breeds who are to be employed by him in such fishing operations.

12. The Licensee shall supply all Indians and half-breeds employed by him with food and lodging; the charge for food and lodging to be deducted from the wages paid to such Indians and half-breeds, shall be approved by the Minister.

13. The Licensee shall provide, if required, food and lodging for a supervisor of all Indians and half-breeds employed.

14. The Licensee shall supply all boats, nets, tents and other equipment which may be required for his fishing operations on Lake Claire.

15. This Licence shall not be assigned or transferred.

16. This Licence shall be subject to cancellation on order of the Minister for violation of any of the conditions to which it is subject, or for any fraudulent return.

Dated at Ottawa, this Eleventh day of May, 1948.

[Signature]
Deputy Minister
Department of Mines and Resources

The McInnes Products Corporation Limited accepts this licence and agrees to all the terms and conditions thereof.

Dated at Edmonton, Alberta, this 4 day of May, 1948.

W. Schlader [Signature]
Licensee

[PAC RG 85 v. 1394 file 431/199 pt. 1]